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THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XIII. No. 311 (New Series) SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 1937 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—The Week-end Review. *Incorporating The New Statesman, The Nation and Athenaeum, Week-end Review.*

RAIN and mud have impeded the fighting in Spain, whence comes belatedly the sad news of the death in action near Cordoba, of a gallant young Englishman, John Cornford. On the Madrid front the Government's defensive positions appear to have been strengthened, and the rebels' hold on the University City is becoming increasingly precarious; but there is still no evidence that Franco has thrown into this battle any appreciable proportion of the thousands of German and Italian regulars now nominally under his command. In the direction of Malaga the rebel advance still hangs fire. Non-intervention has quietly been dropped as an item of front-page news in the press. The Committee continues to meet with faithful regularity in London; plans for a control organisation which dispenses with the assent of the Spanish Government and the insurgents alike are being assiduously discussed; "adjournment" is the one publicly announced method of progression. Meanwhile, Mussolini has landed at Cadiz another large contingent of Italian reinforcements for General Franco. Mr. Eden registers H.M. Government's satisfaction at the unanimous response to his diplomatic efforts to secure neutrality in Spain. The Little Audrey of international Fascism indulges in her time-honoured reflex action.

The Moscow Trial

The "wreckers' trial" in Moscow has resulted in the execution of thirteen of the accused and the imprisonment of four, including Radek and Sokolnikov. Few would now maintain that all or any of them were completely innocent, though there may be many doubts both about the details of the charges and as to the motives or the precise degree of complicity of one or another in this tangled web of treason, assassination and sabotage. What is plain, however, among so much that is obscure and even incredible, is the extent and the gravity of the disaffection. New discoveries of plots are still being made; there have been more arrests, and there are more trials to come. The Soviet masses have been worked up into a state of furious indignation, natural enough in all the circumstances. But what is most serious is the atmosphere of suspicion created both in Russia and abroad. If these Communists—ambassadors, commissars, men of high position in the State—have thus betrayed their trust, what confidence is to be put in others? Mr. Dudley Collard, who was present at the trial, expresses the belief, in a letter which we publish on another page of this issue, that the malcontents are only a minority with no popular support. If he is right, we may hope that the present round-up and the forthcoming trials will mean the final liquidation of "Trotskyism" in the U.S.S.R.—or at least of the infamous projects to which that word is now applied.

The Troubles in America

With the waters of the Mississippi still rising, and at least a million people evicted from their homes, the Federal Government in America has its hands full enough. There seems to be reasonable hope of the dykes holding; but that cannot be known certainly for a few days yet. The President's huge programme of public works, laid before Congress on Wednesday, calls for $116,000,000 for Ohio and Mississippi flood control schemes. The efforts of Miss Perkins and Mr. Roosevelt have not so far availed to bring General Motors to terms; and in Michigan the courts have now ordered the strikers to evacuate the occupied factories, and further declared that all picketing is unlawful under State law. The strikers have occupied another plant, belonging to the Chevrolet company, but are being prevented by the police and militia from getting supplies of food; and there have been street encounters with bludgeons and tear gas, though not as yet with firearms. Mr. John. L. Lewis and the General Motors Vice-President have been in conference; but there is no sign of readiness on the part of General Motors to agree to any form of collective bargaining calculated to meet the Union demands. The strikers have appealed to a higher court against the orders prohibiting picketing and decreeing their expulsion from the occupied factories; but it is not clear whether they will forcibly resist expulsion if it is attempted at once before the appeal can be heard. Nor is it clear whether Mr. Roosevelt means to intervene further, or to leave the dispute to take its course. Unless he does intervene, an attempt will almost certainly be made to work the factories with blackleg labour.

Factory Reform

The text of the long-awaited Factories Bill was issued on Tuesday. The existing law, as everyone knows, is scandalously behind the times, and the new measure will be welcomed—despite its serious blemishes. It abolishes the antiquated distinctions between factories and workshops and between textile and non-textile factories. It reduces the legal hours of work for women and young persons to 48 per week. It contains various new provisions for the health, comfort and safety of the workers. It promises an increase in the numbers of the factory inspectors. So far, so good. But the Bill still falls short of a really civilised factory code. The worst blot on it is its provision for overtime up to a maximum of 6 hours a week and 100 hours a year for women and juveniles between 16 and 18—with power to the Home Office to increase this up to 150 hours (for women) in cases of special pressure. This is deplorable and, in the conditions of British industry to-day, unjustifiable. We regret, too, that the normal working week for young persons is not reduced to 40 hours, that the minimum age of entry into factory employment is not raised, and that there is no mention of holidays with pay. Whether the new safety provisions are adequate remains to be seen; but in any case, why should they wait, as they may if the Home Secretary thinks fit, till January, 1940, to come into operation? The date proposed for the coming into force of the measure as a whole is July of next year, and that in all conscience seems far enough ahead. We hope that the factory reformers will keep their campaign going, and that substantial improvements will be secured in Committee in the House.

Salvation by Subsidy

Two years ago the oil tanker *La Crescenta* sank with all hands as the result of overloading. At the prosecution which followed the defendants were acquitted on the ground that proof of overloading is not complete proof of "unseaworthiness," and therefore not a statutory offence. The Government have introduced a Bill, to which a second reading was given last Monday, to fill this extraordinary gap, and to make fines or imprisonment up to two years the penalty for overloading. The Bill also gives powers to the Board of Trade to compel fishing vessels to carry adequate life-saving apparatus, and it was rightly welcomed from all sides. But this unusual unanimity disappeared rapidly when Dr. Burgin introduced another Bill continuing the £2,000,000 subsidy to tramp shipowners for a further year. The arguments for its continuance seem self-destroying. We are told that the subsidy is still necessary to save the industry from extinction; yet during the last six months of 1936 tramp shipping was more prosperous than in 1929. If, as the owners claim, this was not the result of the subsidy, then what purpose has it served and why should it continue? Nor could anyone answer Mr. Shinwell's charge that the money had been doled out quite indiscriminately, so that wealthy shipping companies are now paying dividends out of public money. There may be a case for a subsidy. There is none for a subsidy which makes no serious provision for reorganisation of a wasteful and unscrupulous industry.

Another Dockyard Dismissal

There has been another dismissal from the Dockyards announced this week. The latest victim of the Admiralty's high-handed methods appears to have fallen originally under the displeasure of the War Office, for which he was working before he resumed his old employment under the Admiralty. Again no specific charge has been made against this man; but it appears that he has been blacklisted by the War Office, and that the Admiralty join in applying the ban. Whether in this case too it extends to the private shipyards we have no means of learning; but it is significant and unpleasant that nothing has been said to clear up the mystery of the circular sent round by the North-East Coast Shipbuilders blacklisting the five men previously dismissed. In the Dockyards the inevitable result of the dismissals has been to create a general atmosphere of suspicion. The Admiralty has denied responsibility for the breaking open of men's lockers which has occurred—and we accept its word. But, when once spies are given their head, it is never easy for the body which employs them to keep a restraining hand on their doings, for spying is essentially a job to which the method of "payment by results" always gets itself applied. The Trade Unions, now reinforced by the Civil Service Confederation, of which the last man dismissed is a member, are pressing their demand for a full investigation. It may turn out that there was good reason for getting rid of the men concerned. But there can be no good reason for getting rid of them in this peculiarly unfair and demoralising way.

Jarrow v. Scunthorpe

The announcement that United Steel Companies, Ltd., is to spend three and a half millions on building a new steel works at Scunthorpe, in Lincolnshire, has very naturally led to a strong wave of protest in Jarrow and on the North-East Coast. Last year the Government refused to do anything to further the acceptance of the scheme for a new steel works at Jarrow on the ground that the enlarged capacity of existing plants had made the building of a new factory uneconomic. Behind the abandonment of the scheme lay, it was well known, the opposition of the existing steel firms in the North East to the entry of a competitor into the trade. It now appears that a new steel works is needed after all, but that the industry is minded to build it close to the iron deposits of North Lincolnshire, and not in a Special Area. We are not in a position to say whether there are sound technical reasons for this decision. Conceivably there are. But Jarrow can hardly be expected to accept them unless they are made public. It may be argued that it is entirely the steel industry's business where it chooses to spend its money, and that the Government has no power to control the location of any new plant it cares to put up. Strictly this is true enough, more's the pity. But the amount of tariff and other bargaining assistance with which the State is providing the steel trade—to say nothing of armament orders—gives the Government ample power, in fact, if only it is prepared to use it. Possibly the case for Scunthorpe as against Jarrow is sound; but the public, and the people of Jarrow above all, can hardly, especially after the Maidenhead aircraft works affair, be expected to take such a conclusion on trust.

Mortality in Nazi Germany

A feature of Germany under Nazi rule has been an increase of 10 per cent. in the nation's annual rate of mortality, which rose between 1932 and 1935 from 10.8 to 11.8 per mille. More remarkable has been the increased rate of mortality among the lower-middle and working classes. According to the official figures published by the *Deutsche Aerzteblatt*, in that section of the population covered by the public health insurance schemes, deaths per thousand rose in the same period from 20.5 to 27—an increase of 32 per cent. Among non-contributory persons included in the schemes the increase was no less than 40 per cent. Here is a grim reflection of the reduction under Hitlerism in the numbers of panel doctors from 40,000 to 30,500, enforced economies in the cost of prescriptions and appliances and curtailment of permitted hospital treatment. In a country whose Government has voted for guns instead of butter, the well-to-do suffer no loss of longevity; but the working classes, which National Socialism was to elevate, provide death, even in peace-time, with a richer and richer harvest.

Air Defence Humbug

If any of our readers have derived a sense of reassurance from the "safety" instructions and propaganda of the Air Raids Precautions Department, they will do well to study a little pamphlet, *Defence That is No Defence*, written by C. E. M. Joad and published by the National Peace Council. In its endeavour to create the impression that adequate precautions can be, and are being, taken against the effects in cities of air bombardment, the Government is presumably endeavouring to inculcate good "civilian morale"—the willingness of citizens to face the prospect of dying horribly. But the suggested means of security prove, on examination, to be illusory. The provision by individual households of a "gas-proof" room is practically impossible, and would in any case be of no avail against thermite bombs. The gas masks which are now being manufactured and stored for distribution to the whole population could not be worn at all by infants, old people or sufferers from lung weakness, and could not be worn by anybody for more than about four hours. Moreover, they would afford no protection whatever against Lewisite or any other vesicant; against these blistering gases the only effective safeguard is a complete "gas-proof" suit, which the Government does not propose to provide. Mr. Joad's exposure of "Air Raid Precautions" is devastating; and there is a further point on which we should welcome enlightenment. Our information is that the cost of the masks being manufactured for distribution is about ten shillings, whereas the minimum factory price of a really efficient mask is nearly £4. If this be so, the inference is disquieting.

The Oxford By-election

Now that Lord Hugh Cecil has at last applied for the Chiltern Hundreds, the Oxford University by-election is in full swing. Nominations will take place next week, and the poll during the last week in February. As the curious system of voting used at General Elections, when two members have to be chosen, does not apply to by-elections, the candidate who scores the highest number of votes will get the seat. This means that Sir Arthur Salter's chances depend largely on the extent to which the Conservative vote is split. Resident Conservatives, except those who support Sir Arthur Salter, are nearly all on the side of Sir Farquhar Buzzard, the official Tory candidate, Professor Lindemann relying chiefly on voters outside Oxford. Politically, Professor Lindemann may be classed as a Diehard. About Sir Farquhar Buzzard's views little is known, except that he is a Conservative. Being in charge of the new Nuffield medical endowment, as well as Regius Professor of Medicine, he seems likely to have his hands very full if he gets into Parliament into the bargain. As for Sir Arthur Salter, if the Government will not give him a really big Civil Service post—say as administrator for the Depressed Areas—Parliament seems clearly the next best thing, and a University seat highly appropriate. If anything could justify University representation, it would be the return of a real progressive Independent. Sir Arthur Salter's record, both at home and as an official of the League of Nations, make him precisely the sort of person a highly educated electorate ought to return. We see from his list of supporters that he has fifteen heads of Colleges and over a score of Professors in the University supporting him—which is not bad for a candidate who is standing for a progressive policy.

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 *Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.*1.
POSTAGE on this issue is : Inland, 1*d. ; Foreign,* 1½*d. ; Canada,* 1*d.*

SI VIS BELLUM . . .

IF the end desired be war, the correct diplomatic course is to decline to participate in any negotiations calculated practically to promote peace. In this sinister sense Herr Hitler's speech in the Kroll Opera House was a model of correctness. Unhelpful and unconstructive in the matter of general European settlement, the Führer responded to Mr. Eden's and M. Blum's overtures by concentrating on the one demand whose refusal is a foregone conclusion—the restoration to Germany of the colonies taken from her by the Treaty of Versailles. From this Government and this Parliament in Britain an unconditional "No," as Herr Hitler well knows, will be the answer, if that demand is formally presented. As must have been intended on the German side, a door leading nowhere will have been slammed.

With the attitude of our own imperialists in this issue we have scant sympathy. They may argue, cogently enough, that Germany's economic case for the return of her lost colonies is weak; her pre-war imports from them were inconsiderable, and in any case her trade returns show that her plea of raw material "starvation" is baseless. Actually she is importing far more raw materials to-day than in the relatively prosperous days of 1929; and if the inordinate consumption by her munitions factories is leading to scarcity of supplies in some branches of non-military industry, that is her own affair. This argument, however, burkes the point that Germany's colonial demands are essentially a political question. When Hitler declares that the demand for colonies will be "raised again and again," he is thinking primarily in terms of *Gleichberechtigung*: no longer shall the Reich, lacking the colonial possessions enjoyed even by minor Powers such as Holland and Portugal, cut the figure, in the world's eyes, of a massive dog without a tail.

To reply to Herr Hitler, as some sections even of the Left in England are inclined to do, that colonies would be of no "value" to Germany is to court the unanswerable question: "Why, then, does England not hand over gladly such valueless chattels?" To say simply, as the majority in Parliament would say, "What we have, we hold," is an even less convincing answer to Germany's demands. *Beati possidentes* is not a constructive article in the creed of any European intent to-day on the preservation of peace. But if we are to get beyond this impasse of negations, there must be a definite contribution from the German side. There is no man or woman of sense in England—no matter how strongly they may have criticised the injustices of Versailles and worked for German "equality"—who would vote for territorial transfers of colonies to the Reich unless they were satisfied of the validity of three assurances on Germany's part—that colonies regained would not be utilised as bases for the preparation of war; that the transferred populations would not be subjected to a "totalitarian" discipline abhorrent to democratically minded people; and that inclusion of colonies in the economic system of Germany would not mean the sterilisation, in an artificially self-sufficient *bloc*, of still further portions of the map of the world.

On none of these points did Hitler's speech encourage hopes of satisfactory assurances. Pacific intentions, as in earlier declarations, were on his lips—there could be "no humanly conceivable object of dispute" between Germany and France; Germany was ready unconditionally to respect the "neutrality" of Belgium and Holland; her relations with a long list of European nations were "excellent." But from that list the name of Czechoslovakia was significantly omitted; Germany's policy in Spain would be to assist in the "restoration of order" (*à la* Franco?); and between Germany and the U.S.S.R. every possibility of *rapprochement* was implacably excluded. As for armaments, Germany must be the absolute judge of her "needs." No word was said by Hitler of the proposed Western air pact. The League and the conception of collective security were brushed aside with derision.

What conclusion can be drawn other than that Germany, from motives which a stupendously rearmed nation cannot ascribe to fear of others' aggression, chooses to accept, if not to lead, a race in competitive armaments whose end must be war? The temper of one who seeks territorial concessions in a spirit of good will and peace is not to be discerned in the Führer's outline of foreign policy; nor was his glorification of Nazi ideology (symbolised in the ban on the acceptance of a Nobel Prize by any German) conducive to hopes that German rule over regained colonies would be liberal or humane. Nor, yet again, can we feel confident that Hitler's interpretation of economic co-operation implies that re-acquisition by Germany of a colonial empire would further its sole conceivable *raison d'être*—the enlargement of international trade. Though prepared to "rejoice at every increase of Germany's foreign trade," he was emphatic that there could be no relaxation of the Four-Year Plan, whose essential object is to enable Germany, in war as well as in peace, to dispense with all foreign sources of supply.

Even for those of us who have no sympathy with the "sit tight" colonial attitude of British capitalistic imperialism, Hitler makes the approach to agreement as thorny as possible. Under pretext of his paranoiac anti-Communist crusade, he appears to offer no more than recognition of the Western *status quo* in return for a free hand to make a war of aggression in the East of Europe. That way, as surely as if he invaded Alsace-Lorraine, lies general European conflict. So long as suspicions, real or unfounded, exist that this may be his design, acquiescence in a demand for the restoration of colonial sinews of war is not practical politics. It is on other lines that an interim solution must be sought. For reasons which we find it hard to comprehend or excuse, Germany has absented herself from the meetings of the committee now investigating at Geneva the problem of access to raw materials. But even in her absence the British Government has an opportunity to give a helpful lead. We should welcome a proposal by Britain (to which M. Blum's support would almost certainly be forthcoming) for the enlargement and modification of the whole system of mandates.

If the claims of the "have-nots" are to be fairly met, and the risk of an explosion under pressure of alleged encirclement mitigated, we should like to see League administration, under a civil service recruited by and responsible to the League, extended not merely to the ex-German colonies but to other Colonial possessions now under the national sovereignty of Britain, France,

Holland and Portugal. Under such a regime these territories would have no tariffs other than those required for revenue purposes or considered necessary, in the judgment of the League administration, for the protection of vital native occupations. The principle of "closed" colonial possessions would be finally liquidated.

Whether such a plan of colonial "equalisation" would satisfy the vaulting ambitions of a rearmed Germany is doubtless open to question. But that is not the point. If the people of this country are to be called on to resist in blood and tears an attempt by Germany to dominate Europe and impose on the world a system intolerable to our ways of thought, it is imperative that the British Government should purge our own past sins of acquisitiveness, and see that the hands we fight with are clean.

THE L.C.C. ELECTION

In 1855, when the Metropolis Management Act set up the Metropolitan Board of Works and equipped London with the bare beginnings of a common government, the area over which the new body was given jurisdiction no doubt seemed quite adequate to provide for the expansion of the population. To-day, eighty years later, the town has so sprawled about the surrounding country that barely half the people of Greater London live within the area controlled by the L.C.C. But the administrative boundaries remain unaltered; and the farther London spreads the more difficult their alteration becomes. The L.C.C. is not the government of Greater London: it is only the chief among a large number of county and urban authorities which share responsibility for metropolitan development. Indeed, the population within the L.C.C. area has already begun to fall, as slums are cleared, houses replaced by business premises, and overcrowding gradually diminished in the crowded districts of the East End. The new populations come to dwell in suburbs outside the L.C.C.'s control; and Central London becomes increasingly an area into which men and women pour by day for business or shopping or amusement, returning at night to the dormitory areas which extend farther and farther in every direction around the metropolis.

This makes the government of London a peculiarly difficult problem; for the London County Council has to provide services for millions of citizens whom it has no power to tax. If it rehouses its slum-dwellers, or builds new houses for the workers in London's industry and commerce, it is usually easiest to find sites outside the L.C.C. area, so that the County Council has largely to incur the expense without reaping the reward. It used to be taken for granted that at every successive valuation London property would be returned at a higher total value than ever before. To-day, that is no longer true. The last valuation recorded a substantial fall, and confronted the Labour majority with the unpleasant necessity of adding 3*d.* to the 7*s.* rate to which it had been hoped to adhere. For the fall in rateable value carried with it no decrease in the need for services which the Council had to provide. Far from it; the more people come to live all round London, the more London has to pay for the common services which their work and their recreation demand.

Three years ago, London County had been for no less than twenty-seven years continuously under Conservative rule. Then, in 1934, greatly to many people's astonishment, the electors sent back a clear majority of Labour representatives to County Hall. That verdict, given so emphatically three years ago, has next month to be either confirmed or reversed, and already the election campaign for the control of London is in full swing, with Labour fighting every seat outside the City, and the Municipal Reformers every seat in which they are not leaving the Liberal candidates—now but a tiny band—a clear run against Labour.

On the score of achievement the London Labour Party has every right to start its campaign in confident mood. Mr. Herbert Morrison has undoubtedly gathered round him at County Hall a very competent team, and has led it very well. Except in the case of Waterloo Bridge, he seems definitely to have avoided the spectacular, and stuck to doing the jobs in hand with the minimum of fuss. Even his election manifesto is a quiet document, devoted rather to a plain record of things done and of concrete plans already in hand than to any blowing of trumpets. He and his party are satisfied that they have done well, within their limited powers; they are content to state their case, and leave the verdict to the people of London.

Their case is not easy to summarise, for it has to cover a very wide field. So far as any single issue is predominant, pride of place must be given to housing and slum-clearance. In this sphere, one of their principal aims has been to provide houses within the means of the poorer people, and to provide them as near as possible to the places where the people work. Thus, instead of being content to develop new housing areas on the edge of Greater London, the Labour Party tried to find sites closer in, and soon discovered that its task was going to be very difficult. Out of this arose the controversy over Hackney Marsh, from which the L.C.C. emerged undoubtedly victorious, having shown plainly that the use of the Hackney Marsh site—with a compensating provision of new open space elsewhere—afforded the only means of effectively housing the overcrowded neighbouring population of East London within reasonable distance of its work.

In actual numbers of new houses built, the record of the past three years is not very imposing. It could not be, in face of the withdrawal of State assistance to ordinary housing schemes and the delays necessarily involved in getting slum-clearance schemes carried out, when hardly any preparation for them had been made by the previous Council. But Labour pressed on with slum-clearance as fast as it could—very much faster than its predecessors in office; and on the basis of plans already in progress or in advanced preparation, the next three years should see every scheduled slum area in London cleared, except a few in the most difficult districts of East London, where rehousing is bound to take time. Simultaneously with this clearance of the slums, the Council is now ready to tackle the overcrowding problem; but here again the difficulty is to find sites not so remote as to impose intolerable travelling costs on the poorer workers who live at present under the most grossly overcrowded conditions.

With housing and slum-clearance go the allied questions of town and regional planning. Obviously, the comprehensive replanning which London really needs is far beyond the strength of any local authority. It is a national question, which can only be tackled boldly with national help and for the whole Greater London area. But the L.C.C., within its limited sphere, has struggled hard to escape from the existing chaos. It has taken a generous lead in the scheme for providing a Green Belt round London—a need which every year of neglect has been making harder to meet. The L.C.C. has devoted £2 million to its share in this collaborative task, in which the other authorities of Greater London have also their parts to play; and already nearly 30,000 acres of open space have been scheduled for reservation in order to form the Belt. At the same time the L.C.C., in addition to Waterloo Bridge, has been at work on two other bridges; and its plans for the next three years include a more ambitious attempt to tackle the transport problem, especially in the East, where a new Thames Tunnel is under consideration.

Perhaps the hardest of all the tasks which Mr. Morrison and his colleagues had to face was that of reorganising Public Assistance; and it is a tribute to their success that since their new scheme came into force, criticism from Right and Left alike seems to have been dying away. The Right have been as unable to accuse the Council of extravagance as the Left of inhumanity—within the limits of the powers given to it by national legislation. The salient features of the Labour

scheme are well known. It was based on the substitution for local co-opted committees, pronouncing on each individual case their opinion of its merits, of salaried officers working by rules laid down by the Council, subject to appeals from their decisions. The small number of appeals, as well as the dying down of agitation, soon showed the superiority of this method, and Mr. Morrison has been able to go on his way almost untroubled by the local agitation which arose out of the notorious inequalities of the previous system. This does not mean that London's Public Assistance is now on a satisfactory basis; for the L.C.C. can work only within the restrictions imposed upon it by national policy. But at any rate unfairness between area and area has been largely prevented; and so far as any Means Test can work well, London's seem to have done so during the past two years.

The London Labour Party's election manifesto covers a much wider field than we have been able to cover in this article. We have said nothing of the great changes in the old poor law hospitals, of school feeding and school milk, of new nursery schools or improved school accommodation in general, of the better conditions of employment for the Council's workers, or of a host of other matters on which the manifesto appeals to the electors for a renewal of Labour's mandate. In all these spheres the record is much the same—one of solid achievement at a moderate pace of advance, made necessary both by financial stringency and by the need for careful planning of each step in advance. It was prophesied when Labour took office three years ago that Londoners would find themselves ruined by municipal extravagance and scarified by incompetent administration. In fact, London Labour has been essentially moderate in its claims, and careful in its handling of public money. Only in a few directions has Mr. Morrison allowed himself to make something of a splash —over Waterloo Bridge, for example, and over the provision of "London Lidos" in the public parks. He has in fact given in London much the same demonstration of moderate Socialism in action as Socialist Governments have been giving simultaneously in Sweden and in Denmark. The result is not Socialism; but it is on the whole good government within the limitations of the existing system. We hope at any rate that London will decisively reaffirm Labour's mandate, and let Mr. Morrison get on with his good work. He should be able to show much larger results in the next three years than was possible during a first period of office, necessarily spent largely in devising plans which are only now ripe for fruition.

A LONDON DIARY

THE B.B.C. Director of Talks last week said that he was very proud of the week's programme, that it had been most carefully constructed so that if you didn't find something to suit your taste on one wave you would find it on the other, and that there was something for all tastes. He asked listeners to write in and say on how many days or evenings they had found nothing to listen to. I meant to write in, but like nearly all sensible people, when I decide to write a letter to the papers or to the B.B.C., I don't do it. It is the nitwits and the exhibitionists who fill the letter-boxes of newspapers and Broadcasting House; the wise man, particularly if he be a Socialist and a journalist, living in a capitalist world, never writes anything which may conceivably be printed for less than the minimum piece-rate of his trade, which is, in all conscience, low enough.

* * *

So I did not write to the Director of Talks. But I had a lot which I wished to say to him. I belong to a class which the B.B.C. calls intellectuals or, more often and more deprecatingly, highbrows. In the controversies and conversations which I have had with those who arrange the radio programmes I have observed that they are prepared to accord to this class the same rights as listeners as the Soviet Government accords to kulaks as citizens. I do not quite understand why this should be. The B.B.C. when confronted by an intellectual listener always treats him as a unique specimen, the only surviving example of a happily extinct species, whose tastes are exotic and probably nasty, and therefore can be dismissed. This is a fiction highly convenient for the programme-builder, but none the less it is pure fiction. There is a very large class in England with the tastes of intellectuals—I know this, because if I particularly want to go to a play or film or concert, all the tickets are always taken, and if I particularly want to read a book the run on it in the circulating library has been such that they have not a copy in stock. No, the class of people who want "serious" music and to be talked to as if they are intelligent adults is not a small one—and we all pay our 10s. a year just as if we were the village idiots and Peter Pans who, they are convinced at Broadcasting House, make up what they call the population of the British Isles.

* * *

I am not writing without my book. About a week before the Director of Talks asked us to write to him, there was an article in the *Radio Times* by some one who had been directed to discover what the "highbrow" liked in the fare provided by the B.B.C. The writer began with the usual uneasy, apologetic approach to the subject of "highbrows." Everything which was said against them was, of course, true, and yet it must be admitted that in the products of art and intellect they demanded and appreciated the best. So he went to his "highbrow" friends and asked them whether they were "radio-fans." They all said yes, but when they were then asked which parts of the programmes they liked best, they all answered: "Oh, of course, we only listen to the music." The writer apparently did not go on to ask why "of course" they did not listen to anything but the music. The reason is that the listener is treated in talks and the rest of the programme, not merely as though he were not an intellectual, but also as if he were not normally and adultly intelligent. The last talk I listened and shall listen to was one on liberty. The matter of it may, for all I know, have been admirable, but the manner of it made it impossible for a self-respecting idiot to do anything but switch to the other wave-length, on which the Director of Programmes had provided a programme of tenth-rate music. The many listeners who are not self-respecting idiots have to fall back on Stuttgart or the gramophone.

* * *

Oddly enough, in the last two days I have seen two complaints by regular writers on the B.B.C. programmes in the press that the Children's Hour had been completely altered and completely ruined; all the Aunties and Uncles have been dismissed and the children now have to listen, according to these writers, to what is in effect an adult programme. If this be true, the B.B.C. must have got the two programmes completely mixed up, for it certainly provides plenty of Aunties and Uncles for the adults. From my own knowledge of modern children and adults in all classes, I should say that none of them want the Auntie business. But let me return for a moment to the request of the Director of Programmes. In the letter which I never wrote to him I should have told him that on an average I find something which I want to listen to on two evenings out of seven, and then—owing to the belief of the B.B.C. that no one can attend to anything for more than 20 minutes—it usually lasts for less than half an hour. Being an intellectual, I want to be given music, and the best music. I don't want music and water. The programme-builders of the B.B.C. suffer from a complex which is best described as x and water. Pure x, whether it be music, poetry, drama, literature, or art, is "highbrow" or dangerous; so you provide x and water. If the best Bach or Beethoven is music, Delius is music and water, or you may find some early Beethoven which is Beethoven and water. The music provided nowadays for "serious" listeners is hardly ever music; it is nearly always music and water.

I was glad to see the President of the Institute of Journalists maintaining that every journalist detests unwarrantable intrusion into private family affairs by reporters at times of grief and distress. In some quarters, however, there is little respect for the privacy of a family in distress if the distress seems likely to furnish "news." I remember some years ago reading a book on the press by a well-known journalist who dealt very seriously with this subject. It is, he said, the duty of a reporter to find out all about it if unfortunately your husband leaps out of a third-floor window or your wife is knocked down by an omnibus. Your safest plan is, therefore, to tell him all about it, for whatever you do, if the story is worth a column it will get a column. Other people besides those involved in domestic tragedies have been complaining of our press methods. The American author of *Gone with the Wind* recently wrote to her English publisher to say that she was "quite upset" by the stories about her which were appearing in the English press. Fifty newspapers had reported that she wrote her book in plaster of Paris, in which she had been encased for three years owing to a motor accident. She has never had a motor accident, she has never been encased in plaster of Paris, and, if she had been, could not have written her book, as she always writes on a typewriter. Some papers report that she is going blind, others that she would have gone blind if it had not been for an operation. She has nothing wrong with her eyes and has never had an operation. And the final indignity is that the papers publish a picture of her which is really the photograph of someone else.

* * *

Mr. Thompson's article on "sport" in India last week brought back to my memory a good many "sportsmen." Years ago I was in charge of a district in the East which was famous for its big game shooting and also contained a game reserve. Outside the game reserve every living thing, from an elephant to a mouse-deer, bolted at the first sight or scent of a human being; the moment you crossed the river into the reserve, herds of deer and buffalos would go on feeding quietly until you were within twenty yards of them and would then just amble off in a leisurely way. As soon as the "open season" started, a stream of globe-trotting and other sportsmen into the district would begin, asking for licences to shoot deer, buffalos, and elephants. In three years I acquired the greatest contempt for them as a class. The rich ones brought trackers and a whole expedition with them from the metropolis; foreign princes often brought a harem as well, acquired in the same place. I have seen the pretenders to most of the thrones of Europe (or their brothers and cousins) starting out into the jungle in bullock carts with a fantastic retinue of male and female riff-raff of the slums of an Eastern town. I once received a telegram from headquarters telling me that a cousin of Queen Alexandra was visiting my district and that I was to look after him. He arrived at my headquarters three days after his main party, consisting of counts, barons, and trackers, had disappeared into the jungle. He was a nervous elderly gentleman and was terrified that I might abandon him before he had discovered his party. It is not altogether easy to find a shooting party in a jungle the size of Surrey. However I took him in hand. The first night we camped in a place by a lake where there was no "big game," but there were plenty of crocodiles. He wanted to shoot one, so I took him up to within 30 yards of a sleeping brute. He fired carefully and hit the ground about ten yards from his own toes. Next day I found his counts, barons, and trackers, and left him with them. When he came back ten days later, his own bag was half a dozen spotted deer, three fine sambur, a buffalo, and a bear. I have no doubt that he fired a rifle at each of these unfortunate animals and a good many more, but I also have no doubt that his tracker fired every time at the same moment—and there is not much doubt which of the bullets hit the beast. The cousin of Queen Alexandra was not the only distinguished sportsman to make his bag in that way.

HYPOCRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to "Physician."

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

His brief history of Edward the Eighth was written before that dark week in December when the spirit of Greek tragedy took control of the course of British history.—*Sunday Times.*

Every Sunday the papers come out with the same story of "rough charging." I can just imagine the reception a Rugger player would get if he asked for a hacked shin to be sponged! I was crocked for life in a sportsman's game, and I'm proud of it.—Letter in *Daily Express.*

On December 22 you ran a story about Dr. Thomas H. Staggers, of Ohio, piling the record number of 3,585 matches on a bottle. I have reached 4,460, and am still putting them on.—Letter in *Daily Express.*

It can now be disclosed that the question of replacing the 38-year old Victoria and Albert was raised last summer. Among the suggestions put forward was one that the next Royal Yacht should be so designed as to be capable of speedy conversion into a fighting cruiser in the event of war.—*Daily Telegraph.*

Blackburn Education Committee decided last night not to give Coronation mugs to schoolchildren. Two aldermen admitted using pint pots. Another said that if they gave the children a cup and saucer it might encourage them to drink from the saucer.—*Daily paper.*

FASCISM'S WEAKEST LINK

APART from the incalculable factor of morale, wars nowadays are determined by the degree of material resources and the technological capacity of the combatants. Although armies still march on their stomachs food is not all; it is the weight of iron and steel and the capacity to produce munitions and aeroplanes, tanks and poison gas, which decide the final issue. Japan has neither the bread and butter of industry—coal, iron and oil—nor abundant food supplies, nor other raw materials, nor a large body of skilled engineers. Lastly, she has not got the foreign investments to finance her purchases of any of these things; she is a debtor, not a creditor, country and her yearly balance of trade is an unfavourable one. Even Italy, similarly poor in coal and iron and similarly without oil, has at least got a well-developed engineering industry capable of turning out first-class automobiles and aeroplanes and tanks. As regards Germany, the third of the Fascist trio, she is of course infinitely stronger industrially than the other two. Germany has iron, steel, a skilled labour force, some of the best engineers in the world, and a capacity for organisation and ability to invent new machines unsurpassed by any other country. Germany is no pigmy or bluffer, like the other two "have-not" powers; Germany is a real industrial giant. Her greatest economic weakness is the inadequacy of her food resources—hence her anxiety to acquire possession of the Ukraine before challenging Western Europe.

Japan by the lately proclaimed alliance gains far more than Germany. Not only has she now a freer hand in the Far East than before, but she will doubtless receive the armaments—in particular aeroplanes—and the technical assistance which she so sorely needs, and the lack of which has up to now prevented her from a direct attack on any first-class Power. Whereas Germany can supply Japan with much of what she needs most, Japan can give Germany only the soya bean, and even the versatile soya bean cannot remedy Germany's whole food deficiency. Strategically the alliance is of course invaluable to Germany, since it will be much easier to start a war on the U.S.S.R. in the East, where the tinder is ready for lighting on the Manchurian or Mongolian border, than in the West where other countries have first to be conquered or won as allies.

Japan by herself is incapable of meeting the strain of a

great war, and those who rule the country know this very well, however loudly the " young officers " and professional patriots may proclaim their readiness to challenge the whole world. Killing unarmed Chinese peasants, or fomenting disunion in China and then taking advantage of it to dismember that unfortunate country, is an easy game; meeting the well-equipped armies of the U.S.S.R., or challenging the naval might of Britain or the U.S.A., is a totally different proposition.

Even a cursory examination of Japan's resources shows her unfitness to challenge any strong Power. Japan is accustomed to boast to the world that she produces more food per acre than any other country, and that in spite of her " over-population " she has succeeded in supplying four-fifths of her staple food from her own soil. The remaining fifth comes from her colonies, principally Korea. Yet Japanese farmers only produce about half as much rice per acre as is produced on plantations in Spain and, what is of the utmost significance in war time, in order to produce this quantity men, women and children have to work in enormous numbers, since there is no machinery used in cultivation and even the use of animal power is very rare. That is to say that for all her " over-population " Japan's agriculture is too mediaeval in technique, too overmanned and under-capitalised, for it to bear the strain of modern war. It would be impossible for Japan to withdraw large numbers of men and women from cultivation into the army and munition factories without drastically lowering the productivity of agriculture and eventually causing a breakdown of the whole national economy. Moreover, Japan's agricultural yield is dependent on a large use of chemical fertilisers—in particular, phosphorites—which have to be imported.

As regards the basic materials of modern industry, the combined pig-iron production of Japan, Korea and Manchuria is only 3 million tons as against Germany's 12½ million and the U.S.S.R.'s 10 million; Japan's steel production, although doubled since 1929, is still only 4½ million tons as against Germany's 17 and Britain's 10 million. The total coal production of the Japanese Empire is only 44 million tons as against Germany's 143 million. It is also to be noted that Germany's production figures in 1929 were higher than these, whereas Japan to-day is producing to the limits of her capacity.

Even if Japan could import all the coal, iron and steel she required in war time she would not be able to get over her difficulties. Her industrial structure is too lopsided and too backward in certain vital respects. Her heavy industry is very poorly developed and her industrial organisation as a whole is excessively wasteful of man power. Although the great cotton spinning mills and rayon factories may constitute a model of " rationalisation " to the rest of the world, the bulk of Japan's factories are tiny " one man and a boy " affairs. There are only 2,000,000 workers in factories employing five or more persons as against over 3,000,000 in non-factory industry. In time of hostilities Japan would almost certainly be unable to produce sufficient automobiles, aeroplanes and tanks, and she would be incapable of rapidly copying the war-time inventions of other nations, much less of inventing new methods of destruction herself. She has only a very small number of skilled engineers; her industrial system, whilst calculated to utilise to its utmost limits the labour of every man, woman and child in the country, is a dangerous and unreliable one when it comes to machines and armaments in which accuracy and exactitude according to specification are of primary importance. To give one example, according to an article in a Japanese newspaper, a firm which obtains a Government contract for aeroplane manufacture has to secure the co-operation of about 450 small " factories," which again sub-divide the work amongst even smaller workshops and households. It has been suggested that the inability of the makers of the various parts to keep strictly to standard, owing to the lack of high-precision machinery, is the primary cause for the technical defects of Japanese aeroplanes, the excessively large number of flying accidents, and the general backwardness of the Japanese air-arm.

Financially Japan is so unsound that her national debt already amounts to 94 per cent. of her estimated national income, as against a corresponding ratio of 13.5 per cent. for Germany in 1913. Indeed, it was the grave financial situation of the country and the demands of the Army and Navy for a further enormous increase in armament expenditure which led primarily to the recent political crisis in Japan. The Budget presented to the Diet on January 21, which caused the first revolt of the political parties since bureaucratic-military governments were revived in 1932, proposes to increase national expenditure by about one-third and to increase the national debt by nearly a milliard yen of new " deficit " bonds. Moreover, real taxation of the rich is to be imposed for the first time. There is to be a progressive income tax and a progressive inheritance tax. Corporations will in many cases pay double what they are paying now. The political parties are the puppets of big business in a much more real sense than can ever be the case in a democratic country, and the giant family trusts, which dominate the economic life of the country, now think that both the internal economic situation and the international situation call for a period of consolidation before further aggression is attempted.

They were opposed to the proclamation of the German-Japanese pact because they still hoped for political and financial support from Britain, and because they had hoped to extort all they want from Chang Kai Shek by " diplomacy " rather than drive him to contemplate armed resistance. China has stood up to Japan for the first time, and Franco is still outside Madrid. As the leader of the Seiyukai Party said in the stormy Diet meeting on January 21, " National finance has been thrown into confusion and 'armed diplomacy' has brought foreign policy to a deadlock."

Exports are already declining, and must decline further if increased taxation raises the price of Japanese manufactures. The cost of importing essential raw materials is rising sharply on account of the world armaments boom. The majority of the big capitalist interests fear a financial crisis and a possible breakdown of the national economy. In any case, aggression and enormous armaments appear less desirable now that they are being called upon to pay some of the cost themselves. They also fear the establishment of that State control of investments, foreign trade and essential industries for which the military Fascists have long been calling. Since it would be the military and the landowners rather than the plutocrats who would control the State, big business is afraid of such a development.

Lastly, as regards morale. If Japan should land herself in a real war it cannot be doubted that a country so full of social hatreds and acute social antagonisms, with so corrupt a ruling class and such a core of agrarian misery and unrest, would crumple up at the first serious reverse and repeat the history of Tsarist Russia from 1914 to 1917. FREDA UTLEY

CHARLATAN

IT is reported from Hollywood that the Marx Brothers have banned the word " charlatan " from the script of their new film. It is not that they are mealymouthed or afraid of the strict American censorship. It is merely that they regard the word " charlatan " as being above the heads of the public. According to the *Evening Standard*, when Harpo first saw the word in the script he objected volubly. " Five out of six people won't know what it means," he told the director. The director agreed to put the matter to the test, and six people were sent for—" technicians, players, any one who happened to be around the set." Each of them was asked, " What is a charlatan? " and in the result it was proved that even Harpo had been too optimistic about the intelligence of the public. Not only five out of six, but six out of six were unable to give the right answer. The six answers given were: (1) " Girl's name," (2) " Old Biblical expression," (3) " Egyptian word,"

(4) " Ice-cream," (5) " Early European emperor," (6) " Don't know."

With this damning evidence before him, was the director justified in leaving the word out of the script? I do not think so. After all, it is one thing to misunderstand a word out of its context and quite another thing to misunderstand it in its context. However incapable I might be of defining " charlatan " to an examiner, I should know, if I heard one film-actor saying to another, " Sir, you are a charlatan," that he was not calling him an ice-cream. That would be going beyond the lunatic humours even of the Marx Brothers. I should also eliminate the possibility that he was addressing him by a girl's name or that he was telling him that he was an early European emperor. In fact, unless the Marx Brothers were acting far below their form, I should conclude at once that one of the characters was conveying pretty clearly to the other his opinion that he was an imposter.

I wish the Marx Brothers would enlarge their investigations into the extent to which the public understands the meaning of words in common use. Take the word " protocol," for example. We have been reading it for years, but, if you went out into the Strand and asked the first six people you met, " What is a protocol? " how many of them do you think would be able to give you the right answer? I am sure that at least one of them would say that it was a patent medicine, another would declare it was some kind of breakfast food, a third would imagine it was a petrol substitute, and a fourth, a little deaf, would think you were asking him something about the prodigal son. Does this mean, however, that politicians, taking fright at our widespread ignorance of the meaning of words, would cease to talk about " protocols "? Far from it. They would as soon part with their " détentes " and their " unilateral " action. Words like these are the jewellery of politics, and we of the public are dazzled by them. I should have little respect for a statesman who said " one-sided " when he meant " unilateral," but I should be deeply impressed if he said " unilateral " when he meant " one-sided." Latin makes politics sound really serious. Or Greek. Or even French. In plain English, however, it must be admitted, politics would sound so simple that we should no longer be able to mistake words for deeds or statesmen's phrases for a first line of defence against disaster.

Even outside politics, new words are born in such rapid succession that it is difficult for the understanding to keep pace with them. How many users of wireless sets, for example, could tell you what a " kilowatt " is? I couldn't. Nor, though I have read the phrase a thousand times, have I the vaguest notion what " high frequency " means. It is the same with the phraseology of weather reports. I could tell you, more or less, what a cyclone is, but I should be stumped in an oral examination if I were asked to define " anti-cyclone." As for that " deep depression " which seems to be the leading export of Iceland, simple though its name is, it is Greek to me. If the policy of the Marx Brothers is right, we should abolish all such words and phrases from the language. And, as a result, the weather reports would lose half their romantic interest. I confess that for me the word " anti-cyclone " brings into weather reports a kind of poetical meaninglessness for which I am very grateful.

There is no use, indeed, in speaking to the public—and by the public I mean myself and several thousand millions of other people—merely in words that it understands. Very few of us understand more than a minority of the words in the dictionary. Since the invention of crossword puzzles, it is true, we have enlarged our vocabulary somewhat and have come to know that an " onager " is a wild ass and that an " okapi " is a bright-coloured and partially striped animal, discovered in 1900, with a likeness to the giraffe, deer, and zebra. But even with these green oases of knowledge added to our map, how spacious our ignorance remains! I was at a Rugby football match the other day with a friend who referred to a touch-judge as a " linesman." I myself for years spoke of the bonnet of a motor car as the " radiator." I once praised in print a beautiful stroke of Woolley's as a " snick " through the slips. Could ignorance go further?

If one may judge from any accounts of intelligence tests one has read, there is scarcely a word in the English language which men and women entitled to vote are incapable of misunderstanding. I was once surprised, while reading a list of " words commonly misspelt " in a book about English, to come on the word " beef," but, from what I know of intelligence tests, I should say that there are a considerable number of people who would find it difficult not only to spell " beef," but to define " beef." After reading of the experiment of the Marx Brothers, and (about the same time) reading some questions and answers about air-raid precautions in the *St. John's Ambulance Gazette*, I could not help wondering how many of the six Hollywood examinees would have been able to define " respirator " or " decontaminate." Take either of these words out of its context and I am willing to bet a three-halfpenny stamp that Hollywood would be flummoxed. In their context, however, I fancy, the words would be intelligible even in Hollywood. One question runs, for example: " If a man has a beard, is the respirator effective? How do you decontaminate a beard? " And the answer is: " Tuck it up, and put it in the respirator; then it is safe. If impossible, cut it off." From this even the man of meanest intelligence would gather that a respirator was a device for protecting the face during an air-raid, and not particularly well-suited to men with beards. He might at first come to the conclusion that " decontaminate " was related somehow to " decapitate " and " decimate," and that it actually referred to the cutting of the beard. He would realise from the answer, however, that this was not so. If the beard was cut off already, why " tuck it up and put it in the respirator? " No man—not even Mr. Shaw—is so much in love with his beard that, after cutting it off, he would want to tuck it up and put it in a respirator during an air-raid. Besides, the next sentence makes it clear that the beard that is tucked up and put in the respirator is still uncropped. " If impossible, cut it off "—what could be clearer? Only one thing, it seems to me—" If possible, cut it off."

The picture suggested is a sensational one. The disciple of Tolstoy, hearing the maroons and finding that he cannot tuck his beard into the respirator, rushes upstairs in search of a pair of scissors. He can find only a pair of nail-scissors with half a blade gone. Now, it is difficult enough even in peace-time to stand before a mirror and cut off one's beard with a pair of nail-scissors with half of one of the blades gone. In war-time, with the anti-aircraft guns going and the aeroplanes zooming, the thing becomes a nightmare. Even the Marx Brothers could scarcely rise to a scene like that. . . .

It is often said that the war to end war taught us nothing. That is untrue. Even twenty years later it is teaching millions of people the meaning of the word " decontaminate," and of scores of other words—" gas-mask," " Lewisite," and so forth—that our fathers never knew. Y. Y.

POLITICAL EXPEDIENCY AND THE LAW

IN moving a vote of censure upon the withdrawal of a criminal prosecution—a vote which brought down the first Labour Government in 1924—Sir Robert Horne said: " If the administration of law should become subject to any considerations of political expediency, then justice, as we have known it in this country for centuries, would disappear." Last week, an answer by Sir John Simon, questioned why the Government had not taken action under the Foreign Enlistment Act to prevent British ports being used for the departure of General O'Duffy's Irish Brigade to fight in Spain, raised this issue once more in an acute form.

Sir John's explanation was as follows:

> Before proceedings can be taken for an offence it is necessary, first, that evidence should be available which is likely to satisfy the

court that an offence has in fact been committed and, secondly, after that evidence has been collected, that the person to be accused is within the jurisdiction. My information is that these conditions were not satisfied in the particular case referred to.

An examination, however, of the possible evidence available does not bear out the Home Secretary's statement. The facts are that shortly after the outbreak of the civil war in Spain a prominent Free State politician, General Eoin O'Duffy, announced his intention of organising an "Irish Brigade" to take part in hostilities against the Spanish Government. Now, the Foreign Enlistment Act makes it an offence either to quit, or go on board any ship with the intention of quitting, the King's dominions with the intention of serving against a friendly State or to induce others to do the same. It would therefore be impossible for General O'Duffy's expedition to proceed through English territory without committing an offence against the Act in England. Secondly, since the Act applies equally to all of the King's dominions, there could be no legal objection to indicting in the English courts those taking part in the expedition for offences against the Act committed in the Irish Free State.

On November 13th the Irish newspapers announced, giving full names and addresses, that ten men were leaving Dublin for Liverpool intending to sail for Spain to join the rebel forces. The next day the Liverpool press announced that these men had sailed from Liverpool on a British steamer belonging to the Yeoward Line. This event should have put the British authorities on their guard.

On November 20th, General O'Duffy himself, with forty others left Dublin for Liverpool. Before leaving the General issued a statement to the press in which he said:

> We are leaving to-night for the Christian front. . . . The Irish legion will, please God, lead in the march to Barcelona.

In Liverpool, interviewed by the *Liverpool Post*, a member of the party stated that they were going to Spain "to fight for their faith." It is hard to believe that similar admissions would not have been made to detectives had the Home Secretary seen fit to have the volunteers questioned. They sailed, like the previous contingent, on a British ship belonging again to the Yeoward Line.

On November 27th a further expedition of eighty-four men left Dublin, again for Liverpool. A full account of the demonstration on their departure from Dublin, which delayed the Irish packet boat for two and a half hours, appeared in the Irish press. At Liverpool they were joined, according to press reports, by a party of ten from Manchester and of twenty from London, and, thus augmented, the expedition sailed for the third time on a Yeoward Line vessel. In each case, therefore, until they disembarked at Lisbon, the members of the expedition were under the jurisdiction of the English courts.

"Necessary information and evidence has not been available," said Sir John Simon. In view of the facts set out, how can such a statement be true? In the course of a two and a half hours' demonstration must not something have been said by some member of the expedition in the hearing of some member of the crew of the Irish packet who would be available in England to give evidence as to the objects of the expedition? Definite statements had been made to the press that the expedition was going to fight in Spain. Was it impossible to secure at least one of the journalists who noted these statements as a witness? Even supposing that such material could not be collected in each case before the expedition sailed, the British Government had three days before the vessel reached Lisbon in which to intercept the volunteers.

A lawyer looking impartially at the facts must reluctantly be forced to the conclusion that absence of evidence cannot have been the reason for not taking proceedings against General O'Duffy and his men. However unwillingly, one is forced to the explanation that the Government were actuated by motives of political expediency. Mr. Baldwin and Sir John Simon would appear to have forgotten with what earnest care for the inviolability of law they both supported Sir Robert Horne twelve years ago.

BARRISTER

Correspondence

THE MOSCOW TRIAL

SIR,—I attended the whole of the Moscow trial as an independent observer. I have made some study of the Soviet legal system, and I can speak Russian. This was the first political trial I had attended, and English newspaper reports of previous trials induced in me certain misgivings as to the genuineness of the charges. My feeling of scepticism was not allayed by the attacks on the defendants published in the Soviet press as soon as the date of the trial was announced.

In this frame of mind, I attended the opening session. The indictment was read, disclosing a terrible list of crimes. I listened to the accused plead guilty one by one. They did not appear to be terrorised, and to the best of my judgment pleaded guilty quite voluntarily.

For the next five days each of the accused was examined in detail on his activities and several accomplices were called as witnesses. Documents were produced, photographs identified. After hearing the whole of the evidence and studying the demeanour of the accused as best I could, I came to the firm conclusion that all the accused were fully guilty of the appalling crimes with which they were charged. I believe that any lawyer who had been present would have come to the same conclusion. I know my view was shared by many foreign correspondents, and distinguished diplomats were overheard to say the same thing.

As is pointed out in last week's leading article, any theory that the accused were induced to confess by threats, torture, drugs or promises, presents insurmountable difficulties even to those who have only read accounts of the trial. To anyone who was present and had an opportunity of studying the spontaneous behaviour of the accused, such theories are frankly ridiculous.

The whole thing rang true. Stroilov's shamefaced confession, for example, or his identification of five German spies from twenty photographs handed to him ("Ah! I know A, only he used to be dressed in grey when I knew him—he is wearing a black suit in this photo. And this is B—with his large ears.")

And gangster Shestov's pride in the neat and workmanlike murder of Boyarshinov, the engineer who knew too much, and in his bank robbery, committed when funds were low. And Arnold's circumstantial account of his attempt on Molotov's life. And Boguslavsky's indignation on hearing for the first time the details of the bargain to partition Soviet territory, of which he had been kept in ignorance. None of these things could have been faked. Grashe the spy, Livshitz the stutterer, Rataichak the obstinate, and all the rest of them told a story of spying, sabotage and planned assassinations which, while amazing, was consistent and coherent.

One or two comments on last week's leading article. I think, as I have said, that the plot does hold together. What the defendants sought to achieve by their activities and why they chose the methods they did are questions which require an understanding of conditions in the Soviet Union.

I think most observers are agreed that the people are solidly behind Stalin, especially since the visible increase in prosperity and improved standard of life of the last few years. It was therefore no use for an opponent of the regime to appeal to the people for support. It is to be observed that the defendants were not charged with conducting any popular agitation, such as printing leaflets, or organising strikes. An opponent was obliged to proceed by individual intrigue, and it was alleged in the trial that Trotsky realised this to be so. Once you have started on the path of intrigue it is not easy to stop. As Radek pointed out, the door is shut behind you. You are gradually compelled, step by step, to descend from intrigue to sabotage, from sabotage to terror, from terror to spying, from spying to treason. That Piatakov and his co-conspirators agreed to cede Soviet territory would sound incredible if it stood alone, but not when it is seen as the logical culmination of a series of acts of opposition.

In my view, rather than indicating a regime divided against itself, the type of activity indulged in by the accused shows them to have been a minority lacking any popular support and able only to pursue their aims by acts of individual violence.

This view appears to me to fit the facts better than any other. It explains, for instance, the absence of a Dimitrov among the accused. To be a Dimitrov you must know that somewhere, inside or outside the court, is popular sympathy for the view you are expressing.

The leading article inquires why such a damaging trial, which is certainly used for propaganda purposes against the Soviet Union, should have been permitted by Stalin. The Soviet Government must of course realise, especially since the Zinoviev trial, the effect of these trials abroad. That they nevertheless held this second trial appears to me to be a further indication that they were faced with the unpleasant necessity of calling to account men who were really guilty of conspiring against them.

DUDLEY COLLARD

SIR,—In your article, "Will Stalin Explain," you raise two main questions: (1) The reliability of the evidence in the recent trial; (2) The advisability of holding the trial now and publicly. May I comment on these arguments?

(1) In discussing the "mystery of the confessions" you confuse, it seems to me, two issues. There is the problem, why did the accused confess? And there is the question, were they guilty? Regarding the former, theorists are busy; but regarding the latter, you cannot adduce any real ground for doubt. The reports of the behaviour of the accused, of their testimony, and the statements of impartial observers, all affirm that the accused were guilty.

The only concrete reason for disbelief in the truth of the prisoners' evidence that you give is that the "personalities and records" of Radek and Sokolnikov would lead one to be sceptical. Whether such considerations should weigh heavily in one's judgment is doubtful, to say the least. The Russian press has published the past records of these men, and has been rewarded with sneers. The best-informed foreign correspondent in Moscow in the period of 1924–30, Paul Scheffer, wrote of them: "The recent developments of the Opposition will lead to the most extreme, most absolute illegality" (November, 1929). The argument based on personalities and past records has two sides to it. I should have thought, therefore, that whatever there is in the trial to puzzle us, the clearest and most obvious fact is the guilt of the accused, and I am surprised that THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION does not express indignation at the characters and deeds of these men.

(2) And why should Stalin "permit" this trial, adopt this "spectacular method" of getting rid of his opponents? What a series of prejudiced questions! Was the trial "spectacular"? Should it have been held *in camera*? etc. It is considered damaging to Russia to admit the facts to Japan and Germany. But don't these countries already know them, don't they instigate them? Or does THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION believe that Germany and Japan do not organise espionage and sabotage in the U.S.S.R.? And is the trial damaging to Russia in the eyes of the "Western democracies"? Surely it is better that Russia should be strong enough to stop its enemies than that it should have to tolerate them.

It seems to me that most of the doubts expressed in your article derive simply from the belief that the charges and admissions were untrue. Make the assumption that they were true, and a host of difficulties disappear. And, further, I would say that this ready tendency to disbelieve is due, in its turn, to a lingering hope that Socialism can be, ought to be, conciliatory to provocations of its outer and inner enemies.

R. PASCAL

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THE POPULAR FRONT

SIR,—Before condemning the idea of a Popular Front, would it not be interesting to judge its results in other countries and to review the main objections by the Labour Party to its formation here?

After the formation of the Popular Front in France, there was an immediate increase in the membership of working-class organisations. The Socialist Party increased from 80,000 members in 1934 to 200,000 members to date, while the Communist Party rose from 30,000 in 1934 to 285,000 in January 1936. The United Trade Union increased over the same period from 800,000 to over 5,000,000. The Popular Front, victorious in the May 1936 elections, seriously rebuffed the ideological advance of Fascism among the middle classes and almost entirely confined that movement to the upper class, its place of origin.

The formation of a Popular Front in Spain led to the same results, and when the Fascist rebellion carried the political struggle to another plane, the Fascist armies were held in check only by the wholehearted co-operation of all the parties of the *Frente Popular*.

The two main arguments against the Popular Front in Britain are that (*a*) the co-operation of the Communist Party with the official Labour movement would frighten away thousands of middle class votes; (*b*) that Britain is "different" from Continental countries. Although I am not a member of the Communist Party, I think it is hard not to notice the growth of Communism in the Universities and the increasing number of intellectuals attracted to Marxism.

It may also be noted that the large and conservative French peasantry and middle-class were not frightened by the bogy of Communism, and French working-class organisations have considerably increased their membership in country districts.

Although it is obvious that the British Popular Front would not be an exact replica of the French and Spanish variety, it is absurd to imagine that Britain is very different from other European countries. That idea must be put down to the extraordinary insularity of so many British Labour leaders, which is all the more surprising when we consider how closely the destiny of this country is connected with the Continent.

To sum up, it is interesting to see the advance of the working-class movement in France and Spain due to the formula of the Popular Front, and to compare it with the stagnation in Belgium and here, where the heads of the Socialist Party look upon the Popular Front with quite savage suspicion.

NEIL STEWART

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WELSH NATIONALISM

SIR,—The letter of "Anglo-Welshman" is a faithful reflection of the mentality of the hybrid racial group to which he says he belongs. The keynote to their ideal is the materialist conception that self-interest should induce all small nations to lose their racial identity and be absorbed by their neighbours. It is not the first time in the history of the world for a small and politically subordinate people to be told that the best thing it can do in its own interests is to abandon its language, however ancient, to throw away its literature even though it has lasted a thousand years, and to merge its ethnical individuality in the personality of its powerful neighbour. Sometimes this pressure succeeds, sometimes it fails. There are Anglo-Canadians to-day who resent the tenacity with which the French-Canadians cling to their language and their racial consciousness. In South Africa there are so-called imperialists who desire nothing more than the extinction of the Dutch language. In Ireland there are still Anglo-Irish who are never tired of scoffing at the ancient language and literature of Ireland and sneering at De Valera. All these enthusiastic anglophiles of the gospel for the self-glorification of the English suffer from racial tribalism in its aggressive and worst form. Yet the Anglo-Welshman, the Anglo-Canadian, the Anglo-South African, the Anglo-Irishman really believe profoundly that racial tribalism is a retrograde movement peculiar to Frenchmen, Dutchmen, Irishmen and Welshmen!

I doubt whether "Anglo-Welshman" is so well acquainted with the cultured set of Welsh education as some of your readers might infer. If he were, he would have seen the fallacy underlying his assertion that the Welsh Nationalists are making a fetish of the language. What he is referring to, no doubt, are certain movements on the surface of Welsh life which illustrate how the influence of the Welsh University has led to the revival and renaissance of Welsh education during the last generation or so. The plays and works of continental workers have been translated direct into Welsh from Norwegian, French, German, Italian and Spanish, and not through the medium of English. The late Professor Sir John Morris Jones learnt Persian in order to translate Omar Khayyam into Welsh—he was not content with Fitzgerald's translation. With the further extension of the function of the State into social and industrial life the official recognition of the Welsh language has become more and more marked. Acts of Parliament require the clergy of the Welsh Church to be Welsh-speaking, and inspectors of factories and coal mines to be Welsh-speaking. In passing those enactments Parliament merely recognised the necessity of requiring a knowledge of Welsh when that knowledge was essential to the execution of certain duties. To-day successful Welsh farmers and others who have only a nodding acquaintance of English are demanding that the forms of the Milk Board and the Pig Board and the Inland Revenue should be set out in Welsh for the information of those who do not understand English. Is this what "Anglo-Welshman" has in mind when he accuses the Welsh Nationalists of making a

fetish of the language? Taken collectively the Anglo-Welsh fraternity have lost their language, and as in these days a knowledge of Welsh is a passport to certain offices of public service, they do not relish this exclusion of them from these positions of trust. What is true is that the Nationalists attach a supreme importance to the preservation of the Welsh language as the chief emblem of their nationality. What is untrue is that there is any kind of analogy, as "Anglo-Welshman" asserts, between the activities of the Welsh Nationalists and those of Hitler towards the Jews. The Celt is never likely to practise the systematic torture and the wholesale murder and the insane persecution of which, apparently, Teutons to-day are so proud. LEX

SIR,—The attitude of "Anglo-Welshman" towards Welsh Nationalism seems to me to be based on a misconception. "Language," he says, "is a means of communication." But communication of what? There is no such thing as communication in itself. The value of communication lies in what is communicated. I would deny emphatically that "what the world needs at the present moment is that communication should be made easy." Ease of communication during the last hundred years has resulted in the partial or total destruction of practically every beautiful or valuable thing in the world. We know what the communications of England to Wales are at present. The Welsh Nationalists, and I with them, consider that these communications had much better be restricted, as far as possible, to a country which has no longer a popular culture left to destroy. The only ideas which Wales is likely to lose by the perpetuation of her own language and culture are the ideas of the talkies and the gutter press, of mass barbarism and unchecked commercialism. It is surely obvious that the mere possession of a language which has "no commercial value" is an incalculable weapon of resistance against these things. The Welsh are to be envied for not having to share a language with Hollywood. Does not "Anglo-Welshman" understand that the resurgence of Nationalism in Wales is only part of a great movement of revolt against those very "ideas" whose free circulation he wishes to ensure? That this attitude is implicit in the Nationalist movements of Ireland, of Scotland, of Brittany? That it deserves not merely the sympathy but the active support of those in England who remember that England, too, once had something which could be called a popular culture, but not, unfortunately, a "Nationalist" movement to protect it?

"Anglo-Welshman" cannot have it both ways. Either the Welsh are a nation or they are not a nation. By nation I do not mean the appurtenance of a tourist-agency, replete with picturesque local customs for the benefit of English visitors, but a people with a traditional way of life. It must be obvious, in view of the ever-increasing drive of international uniformity, that if the Welsh are to remain a nation in this sense, they will have to become, for the time being, exclusive, even narrowly so. They can do this only through the Welsh Nationalist Movement. The question therefore will be: Do they wish to remain a nation or not? If the answer is in the negative, then international barbarism will have completed the destruction of one more national culture. If the answer is in the affirmative, then no doubt, as "Anglo-Welshman" says, Welshmen will find increasing difficulty in obtaining posts in England. Possibly they will not consider this too great a sacrifice.

62 Oakley Street, S.W.3. MICHAEL NATHAN

IS OPERA POPULAR?

SIR,—In what appears to me a timely and reasoned plea for a wider support for opera Mr. W. J. Turner uses his opportunities to deny that the film is a new form of art, and at the same time attempts to discredit the film critics who claim that it is. He asserts, and here he has reason, that the film is analogous to printing in that it has "enabled drama and music to be multiplied and distributed a thousandfold," and proceeds to remark that "actors have got to learn to act before they can be filmed." From these premises he assumes that films do not bring us a new form of art.

Presumably he would consider that the cinema was doing its job if a cameramen were to visit the stalls of a theatre, film a complete play exactly as performed and then present the resultant print as a reproduction of the work of art represented by the original play. I am afraid that experienced and critical cinemagoers would not be happy with that. Some of the biggest screen failures are attributable to just this misconception of the function of the cinema.

As an experienced and critical theatregoer, Mr. Turner will agree that the cinema lacks the direct emotional appeal which is generated by the "personal contact" between the stage performer and his audience, and on which every play must rely not only for its success, but for its illusion of actuality, and it is the negation of realism in films which robs the filmed play of its greatest force. Instead, the film should be made to do and say things in ways that are not possible in the theatrical idiom. The essence of the cinema is in its use of movement, and its power of suggestion by appeal to the imagination. The flat screen, the monochrome rendering of the images, or their rendering in sometimes improbable colour, and the reproduction of speech and music limited in frequency and presented at virtually the same intensity level in all parts of the auditorium, all combine to destroy reality and to demand some different form of expression, some new art.

This is being found, slowly but none the less certainly, by the foremost directors (theatre equivalent—producers) engaged in developing this new entertainment. Gradually they are forsaking the reproduction of realities for the suggestion of realities and ideas. Whereas the memorable moments of a theatrical performance are usually those associated with a great emotional reaction to the illusion of presence at an actual event, the greater moments of the screen are often those where one reacts to suggestion.

The nearest thing that the theatre has to the cinema is the "curtain." This deliberate cutting off of the action is directly comparable with the "cut" in a film, stimulating an imagination which has been dormant while the receptive faculties have been employed. This device can be used very effectively in the theatre, but only rarely in one play, if indeed it is used with effect at all. A film lasting an hour or so is full of dozens of such devices and many others, all of which combine to tell their story in a way entirely foreign to the theatre.

It is in the careful and experienced use of the resources of the cinema that film art lies. The acting should, of course, be good, but unless the possibilities and limitations of the film form are taken into account, no acting in the world can make a film good. Audiences cannot be won by acting alone. They may not know what it is that wins them, and in that the film critic can help by developing film appreciation, but they instinctively know the well-made film from the badly made one, simply because films make their strongest appeal to the imaginative instincts.

If Mr. Turner denies that there is art in the control or direction of film technique, then he may quite honestly deny that the film is an art, but he should first take the trouble to examine the grounds for a critic's claim that it is so, and base his own arguments on a better informed and more logical reasoning. P. W. DENNIS

Tatler Theatre, Foregate Street, Chester.

SIR,—Mr. Turner, like Miss Oatis, regrets, Mr. Turner says, quite justifiably, that "young people" are not being taken to the opera. May I ask how "young people" could have possibly witnessed much opera at Covent Garden before this year?

The Opera Season at Covent Garden started, in former years, at the very end of April, at the same time, that is, as the schools return for the summer term. In the last four years I have never been able to see more than four days of the summer season in any one year. I have never been able to go to Mr. Turner's Cathay-Glynbourne, which is invariably in the middle of the summer term.

I think that if Mr. Turner would have the "young" educated in opera and, indeed, in any other form of music, he should blame not the "modern" parent, but the Norns of the musical world, whoever they may be. M. L. S.

THE P.O.U.M.

SIR,—Mr. Lincoln Croyle writes about my book, *Spain To-day*, that "the author has Trotskyite sympathies and devotes a lot of attention to Maurin and the P.O.U.M." Mr. Croyle seems to imply that the P.O.U.M. is a Trotskyite party. There are some Trotskyites in the P.O.U.M., but as a party the P.O.U.M. is no more Trotskyite than is the I.L.P. in this country. The Communists, in their desire to discredit their Marxist rivals, persistently call the P.O.U.M. a "Trotskyite" party in order to accuse them of being "agents of Fascism."

I devoted a lot of attention to the P.O.U.M., not because of "Trotskyite sympathies"—which I do not have—but because the P.O.U.M. has done much to smooth out the differences between the Socialists and Anarchists in Catalonia. A growing understanding between Anarchists and Socialists is an indispensable condition for their victory over the Spanish reactionaries.

I also wonder where Mr. Croyle has found a " good pen picture " of Companys in my book. It had escaped my notice so far.

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Gondar Gardens, N.W.6.

MOTOR CARS AND SPEED

SIR,—" Hypocritic," in his " London Diary " of January 30th last, says that a car travelling at 35 miles an hour requires " many times its own length " in which to pull up, however powerful its brakes may be. The optimum distance is actually 41ft. for my own car, which measures 15ft. 2in. My car is a cheap car. It would be more accurate to say that the average car can pull up in three times its own length at 35 m.p.h. B. H. DAVIES

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SIR,—I like the knowledge that I must either run or die. I like being sworn at by irate motorists. Therefore I am the only person, so far as I know, who demands his lawful rights at Mr. Belisha's pedestrian crossings in London. Now it occurs to me that it would be desirable to extend their facilities to the other 7,560,008 potential users. May I make two suggestions?

First, the beacons should be removed wherever the traffic is controlled by policemen or coloured lights. In these situations the pedestrian has not the right to cross unless the lights or the policeman say so, and therefore at *every* beacon people hesitate lest some light or policeman lurks unseen. If pedestrians could have the assurance that the beacons always indicate immunity from the attack of motorists, they would use the beaconed crossings. Secondly, I suggest that a line be drawn half-way across the road in such a place that the motorist must cross it fifteen yards or so before he comes to the crossing. (The exact distance would be a matter for experts.) The pedestrian would be given the right of precedence over every vehicle that has not started to cross the line when he sallies into the roadway. He would have no right to go in front of any vehicle which had already started to cross the line. Obviously the pedestrian cannot expect the motorist to stop in a yard or two; and at present, in the absence of any official ruling as to the reasonable distance in which one can require a motorist to give way to one, force decides the issue.

Perhaps I ought to mention that, like nearly all pedestrians, I am a motorist. JOHN R. BAKER

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ANTHROPOLOGY AT HOME

SIR,—I am not a very highly educated person and perhaps that is why I am rather alarmed at the letter signed by Mr. Harrisson, Mr. Jennings and Mr. Madge, in your issue of January 30th. I know it is very important to understand nowadays why everybody does everything, but I do not like the idea of 5,000 strangers observing my private life (which wouldn't be very private anyway by then), and I couldn't think of letting anyone observe my bathroom behaviour or my armpits, though I don't mind showing my eyebrows and my aspidistra to any or all of the fifty gentlemen already observing things.

I don't know what taboos are, but I'm sure I don't eat them, and none of the other things seems to apply to me; but I will be glad to help in any way I can except on the points above, i.e., armpits, bathroom and private life. A MIDWIFE

"ENG. LIT."

SIR,—I read with interest Mr. Frederick Laws' article on Mr. Stephen Potter's *The Muse in Chains*. I quite agree that English examination papers do nothing to promote a love of English Literature. Mr. Laws' dictum that " Eng. Lit. is an experiment in education which went wrong " is intriguing. Once, before the University of London adopted set books in English, mothers used to start taking their young sons and daughters to Shakespearean plays, which the children enjoyed. It is not often that they enjoy the set books at present. Indeed, a young person with whom I went recently to see the play *Jane Eyre* remarked that it was a pity that they read books like *Jane Eyre* at school, as it made the pupils dislike them.

I have long thought that if they must have set books it would be better to have biographies and autobiographies.

Mr. Laws remarks " there is no philosophy of Education in England." The fact is that every writer on education writes under the influence of his own philosophical bias. As there is no subject on which there are so many individual opinions, there is not likely to be " a philosophy of education." We should be thankful if there were a pedagogy. JESSIE WHITE

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Miscellany

A CHANGEFUL NIGHT

THE short train stopped at the end of a branch line among the hills of Central Wales. " All change! " shouted the stationmaster, and everyone got out, though there was nowhere to change to. I shouldered my pack, holding what was barely needed for one night, though I knew the walk before me was a long one. For when I was a boy I once walked from Shrewsbury, starting due west across the Welsh Bridge, being sure that in course of time I must reach the mountains, and mountains had always stirred a wild passion in me. But now the little railway had taken me more than half the distance, and it was no longer a passion for mountains that brought me there.

I passed through the white gates of the station and down a long narrow street, where one by one the passengers turned aside into their demure and solid stone houses. There was a spectral sense about the place, and in each upper window gleamed a tiny light, showing that people were afraid of the beings that walk in darkness, and they no longer loved the ghosts of the departed, who might yearn to return to warmth and human fellowship. It was close upon midnight, the hour when ghosts love to seek their comfortable homes, and can even be heard fluttering like moths against the window-panes. Rain fell in unceasing downpour, driven by a gale from the western sea. I had just returned from the war, and water dripped from the edge of my cap and streamed down the surface of my trench-coat. Soon I could feel it at every step squelching up and down in my long trench-boots.

" Somewhere here I must turn sharp left," I said, remembering the way after twenty years, and, sure enough, at a corner there stood the white signpost, just visible in the rain and inscribed with the name of the pass I had to cross. A solitary road lay before me, leading upward against the full force of the gale. I knew it was the steep path over the Mowddwy range, and the great mountain itself must be standing on my right as I climbed. But all the mountains were covered with a thick white mist. From somewhere above the rushing clouds the moon gave a malign and uncertain light, but as the path ascended always more steeply the glimmer upon the track was so obscured that often I found myself stumbling into furze bushes or brought up sharp against a rocky wall.

There was no sound but the lashing of the rain and the pouring down of streams. Even the curlews were silent, cowering in the deep chasms of the bog under shelter of the heather. Suddenly a flash of forked lightning revealed for a moment the drenched path before me and the roots of the hills that hung above me on either side. Then came the thunder crashing down the valley, and the stream of rain redoubled. Hail came with it, cutting my face with icy stones, and at each crash the rage of the storm increased.

After a long struggle I heard close in front a sound more threatening than thunder. It was the roar of a torrent which had gathered tearing force from the deep and saturated bogs above me on the left. Soon I was standing on the very edge of a rushing stream foaming against the rocks. I wondered for a moment whether it was flowing to fill the Mawddach estuary and issue into Tremadoc Bay, or would it run into the devious Vyrnwy, join the Severn far behind and swell the Bore surging up the Bristol Channel as far as Gloucester? And for a moment I remembered my uncertainty whether a broad river across which I once had driven an ox-wagon in

Angola would emerge westward into the Congo and the Atlantic, or turn east into the Zambesi and the Indian Ocean.

Anyhow, I had to cross this torrent now, for I knew what awaited me on the other side, still far away. Wading in, I missed the obliterated track and sank into a deep hole where the rush of water surged up to my waist and threatened to force me down over the edge of the next plunge. Slipping on the rocks and slimy mud, I waded on till I clung to a great tuft of heather on the further bank and scrambled out on all fours. To my mind came the words, "Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it." Indeed, the Song of Songs had been throbbing in my brain all the way since I started on my ascent into the hills.

I shook myself like a dog and, leaning against the rush of rain and wind, I peered out in front and saw that the drive of the thunderstorm was gradually causing the mists to rise from the lower mountains. Over the moon the clouds were growing thinner and turning brown in a circle around her light. As I stumbled along the rocky and sodden path the shape of the big mountains hanging over the entrance of the pass as though on guard became dimly visible, and far away I thought I could see a gleam of moonlight on water. Was it the broad estuary? Or perhaps even the sea itself? Far away, too, on my left-front the shape of a giant peak became almost clear in purple darkness, and I knew at once it was the sideways edge of the great mountain which I had so often tried to make out from my high bedroom window in the old Schools—the most beautiful mountain I had then known, a curtain of precipitous rock facing towards the estuary, but when looked at from the east as I was looking, a peak rising sharply into the upper air like some inaccessible Alp, I knew I must now be on the summit of the pass, and began to run down a sloping path, often falling full length over unseen rocks and the channels of streams that poured into the valley far below.

"It must be getting on for three o'clock," I thought, and I hastened all the quicker. At last I saw before me a small grey house strongly built of slate and stone, and a little light was posted at a window. I knew it was the "Cross Foxes," an ancient inn where I had once stopped in boyhood. But it was not an inn I was seeking now. At the end of the mountain track over the pass I knew I should find a broad road, winding in great zigzags down towards a cluster of lights which marked the market village that I had once known so well.

But I had been told not to enter the village. I was to look carefully at each cottage that I passed beside the road itself. They stood some hundreds of yards apart, and none showed the sign that I was to look for. On and on by winding curves went the road till over a small bridge I crossed a rushing stream swollen with the rain, and at its falls showing white in the gloom. Yes! I had been told to cross a bridge, and then, only a hundred yards beyond, I should come to a whitewashed cottage, and should see a sign.

I came to a cottage. In both stories a light was burning, and that was the sign. I opened the wooden gate and ran up the stoneflagged pathway to the door.

Inside I could hear a low voice singing words from that very Song of Songs which had beat in my mind all through the darkness and storm.

"I sleep but my heart waketh," it said. "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth; I sought him but I found him not."

And at the door I answered, "Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night."

And the voice cried, "The voice of my beloved! Behold he cometh leaping upon the mountains. My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my heart was moved for him."

And I answered, "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed."

And the voice said, "Make haste, my beloved. His left hand should be under my head and his right hand should embrace me. He shall lie all night between my breasts. My beloved is mine, and I am his, until the day break and the shadows flee away."

The door was flung open, and I cried, "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, terrible as an army with banners? My dove, my undefiled is but one. How fair and how pleasant art thou for delights! Thy two breasts are like two young roes that are twins, which feed among the lilies. I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? Thy love is better than wine."

And she said, "Make haste, my beloved. Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death. Make haste, my beloved!"

"Make haste and get up and wash," said a different voice at my side.

"Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth," I murmured.

"None of your nonsense," said the Nurse. "You've got a temp. Just put this thermometer into your mouth. Get it well under your tongue, and we'll see."

"He shall lie all night between my breasts," I murmured again.

"None of your wicked nonsense," she repeated. "I'm not that sort of a female. Get up and wash or the doctor will be round before I've finished with you," and she shook me by the leg.

"I sleep but my heart waketh," I answered. "It is the voice of my beloved that knocketh, saying: Open to me my sister, my love, for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night. His left hand should be under my head, and his right hand should embrace me."

"Don't you let Sister hear you," said the Nurse, dragging my legs out of the narrow bed and beginning to swab my face down with a flannel dipped in warm water.

"I'm only quoting the Bible," I protested.

"I don't believe you," said the Nurse. "I've always heard tell as the Bible's a *good* book," and she rubbed my face with a towel.

As I lay down again I noticed that on the top of my bed was a card written "Male Scarlet"; and a temperature chart beside it.

"How many Scarlet Females have you?" I asked, but the Nurse had hurried on to the next bed, where a poor fellow seemed to be spitting his throat out.

HENRY W. NEVINSON

NUPTIALS

TROUSERS, alas, grown very much too tight;
Grey waist-coat; tie which never will come right;
Carnation, with attendant grassy plot;
The ever-unsolved problem—spats or not;
Re-roll umbrella—vain attempt to hide
The hole (made by a spear?) gashed in its side;
The battered "topper," like a rat gone gay:—
Another cousin's to be wed to-day,
And I must drink champagne all afternoon;
Admire the gifts (especially my spoon),
As eagerly from Aunt to Aunt I plod
So that the pair be brought to bed in god.

PETER CHAMBERLAIN

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Behind Your Back," at the Strand

This play is slight enough but amusing enough, though if such an emotional life as is here shown were to go on every night in the foyer bar, the curtain would never go up. It is not the plot that matters, but the decoration and in this case the decoration is pleasurably attractive. The stock lady-dramatist is well-enough drawn, though her American boy-friend belongs to the

novelette and the studies of a barmaid and a char are acutely observed and well played by Miss Kathleen Bontall and Miss Phyllis Morris. Mr. Jack Melford is admirable as an overworked manager and an unidentifiable actress as a very refined programme girl. All the lighter side, in fact, was delightful and it was only when the drama of the Box Office girl's attraction to the Commissionaire intruded that the play lost its balance. However, the little girl found a substitute and the play came to a pleasant close. A particular word of praise for that good actor, Mr. Martin Walker, who gave a first-rate performance, as a drunken member of the audience marooned in the bar. His uncanny perception of what the staff were trying to persuade him to do was in the best drunkard's manner and the short time he was on the stage proved the most agreeable of the evening.

"Dreaming Lips," at the London Pavilion

The English Cinema, her Cinderella days past, has been altogether transmuted, changed and won from her former untidy inefficiency by a corps of foreign experts. *Dreaming Lips* is English by birth, launched under the eyes of Queen Mary herself; and the credit for this achievement will go to the one-time kitchen-maid, rather than to the sort of Artists' International who deserve it. Mr. Schach, the producer, is German; Dr. Czinner, the director, is Austrian, Miss Bergner is Austrian too, Mr. Romney Brent is American, even Mr. Raymond Massey is Canadian, and the script is from the German. Of all the importations the script is the least happy. As all those who saw *Träumunde Mund* will remember and expect, this is a triangle drama of the most desperate sort, unrelieved by any sign of common sense among the characters. Miss Bergner keeps her dangerously elfin charm down to a minimum, and when she forgets it acts brilliantly indeed. Mr. Raymond Massey gives a dignified but somewhat incredible performance as the impassioned virtuoso, and Mr. Romney Brent fairly sinks himself in the infantilism of the husband's part. Such talents and technique are thrown away on this story.

"Three Men on a Horse," New Gallery from Sunday

Apart from the expense of buying the stage play and paying the salaries of Miss Joan Blondell, Mr. Frank McHugh and half a dozen good small part actors, the production of *Three Men on a Horse* can have cost the Warner Brothers very little. Two sets and a half were all it needed and it got no more, and apart from a long shot of Ozone Heights and a stock horse-race the whole thing could have been filmed in the theatre. It is typical of the new economical Hollywood that a film can now be made with so little added and so little taken away, with no great stars and no embroidery. The play was about the little "suburbanite" who, between writing verses for greeting cards, could predict the results of horse races. Anyone who saw it at Wyndham's will miss the bright coloured bar-room, but very few of the lines. And this is essentially a film of good lines. It is very funny.

Drawings by Picasso, at the Zwemmer Gallery

Certainly the most inventive as well as the most influential painter alive, and comparable as a draughtsman with any man whose work has survived from the past, Picasso is this week represented for the first time in London by a show entirely of drawings. One begins by being bewildered by his accomplishment. In this he resembles not so much the struggling almost amateur men of genius in the nineteenth century as the great figures in the Renaissance tradition. (It is often forgotten that he is half Italian in blood.) Like Michelangelo rather than Degas, he seems to draw from his knowledge and imagination rather than with his eyes fixed voraciously upon the model. And he has the air of ease and grace, the power of filling out a generalised formula with special experience, that one finds in the best Baroque and eighteenth-century draughtsmen. After admiration for his virtuosity comes a profounder response to his poetry. He gives to his subjects the importance of a myth, recreating Greek ways of feeling for his own time, rather as Botticelli and Greco did for theirs. The nudes in his smallest sketch are more than life-size—Goddesses, Muses, Sages and Titans. Sometimes, and we think regrettably, he petulantly or angrily expresses the cruelty and despair of the world in which we live. But it must be admitted that he also owes something to the age: the disquietude which agitates his pencil, and the unprecedented freedom from every tie or convention. (This freedom is the damnation of minor artists—only men of genius are safe on unmapped peaks.) This exhibition requires careful study: its variety is prodigious. It shows convincingly that in the arts modern Europe, which seems at least momentarily decadent in literature and music, can show one great master worthy of the mighty past.

THE COMING WEEK

FRIDAY, February 5th—
"Uncle Vanya," Westminster Theatre, 8.15.

SATURDAY, February 6th—
Lener Quartet playing Beethoven, Queen's Hall, 3.

SUNDAY, February 7th—
J. D. Bernel on "The Frustration of Science," 81 Rochester Row, S.W.1, 8.
Socialist Party of Great Britain. A. Kohn on the State: Fascist, Labour and Soviet, at A.E.U. Hall, 39 Doughty Square, Bloomsbury, 7.30.
Moritz J. Bonn on "Isolation," Conway Hall, 11 a.m.

MONDAY, February 8th—
"The Economic Problem and World Peace." 1. The Western Continental Democracies. Graham Hutton. National Peace Council, Essex Hall, W.C.1, 6.15.
Courtauld Sargent Concert, Beethoven Mass, Queen's Hall, 8.

TUESDAY, February 9th—
"In Defence of Madrid," film, etc. Speeches by Wal Hannington, Mrs. Charlotte Haldane, at The Baths, Prince of Wales Road, Kentish Town, N.W.5.
G. P. Gooch on The Outlook in Europe. League of Nations Union, Kensington Town Hall, 5.30.
Dr. Edward Glover on "Sex and Education," Suffolk Galleries, Suffolk Street, Haymarket, W.1.

WEDNESDAY, February 10th—
Lectures on Mental Hygiene of Childhood. Dr. Margaret Hay, Dr. Margaret Lowenfeld. Friends House, Euston Road, 8.15.
"Candida," Globe Theatre.
"As You Like It," New Theatre.
Lener Quartet playing Beethoven, Queen's Hall, 8.30.

THURSDAY, February 11th—
Fabian Society. L. F. Elmhoist on "Community Planning," Livingstone Hall, Broadway, Westminster, 8.
London Philharmonic Orchestra. Walton's *Belshazzar's Feast*, Mozart's Mass in C Minor. Malcolm Sargent, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
"Road to Ruin," by Thomas Holcroft, Ambassadors Theatre.

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Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

A STRETCH of heavy clay land in West Suffolk, where the fields slope to the north and lie deep in mud all through the winter and are almost waterless in summer, is about the last place which you expect to see blossom like the rose. It is the kind of land which on the map is sprinkled with names like Hawbush Farm, Thorns, Duck's Hall, Puttock's End, Hungry Hall; names which carry their own message to a countryman, a district which one feels sure would mark the grave of any enterprise on the part of an adventurous stranger with some name like Scattergold, or Fool's End. However, a slender summery-grey man, who appeared to have miraculously preserved the pre-war optimism of his early twenties, suddenly appeared in this district, bought a farm, poured out money on it, mechanised it, planted fruit, and made his enterprise pay. Mr. Adrian Bell, himself a farmer and the author of *Corduroy*, *Folly Field*, etc., was near enough to watch proceedings with critical interest and he has now published an account of his surprising neighbour and of his still more surprising success. *By-road* (Cobden-Sanderson, 7*s.* 6*d.*) is in some danger of being taken by the uninitiated reader as a parable when it is, in point of fact, a drawing from the life of what an exceptionally gifted and enterprising business man has been able to achieve. The very title *By-road* may I think be intended by Mr. Bell as a sort of warning that he is not sketching from his imagination the broad highway to success which all may follow.

* * *

By-road, however, is a book which will fire a good many of its readers with a longing to imitate Rayner. Hundreds of people may start dreaming of chucking going to the office and embarking on a plan of revolutionary farming which is rapidly going to transform the face of England. Nothing is so exciting as to begin to act on such dreams: to take a farm, plant fruit, start keeping pigs, fowls, geese, bees. And then suddenly the dreamer is pulled up by an unexpected set of facts: the sums don't work out right. The pigs eat more than was expected and put fat on in the wrong places, the ducklings start growing their feathers before they are big enough to kill, the trees don't bear or there is no market for the fruit. The English countryside is scattered with relics which mark how men have set out to farm in some new infallible kind of way, pinning their faith to some revolutionary modern method, some latest form of machinery or new kind of crop. In many cases these adventurers revert to the traditional methods and make a miserable sort of living. It is therefore important to analyse just what distinguishes Rayner from the hundreds of optimistic, energetic and often intelligent men who have failed at revolutionary scientific farming. The first thing is the man himself. Rayner had plenty of money and had been a highly successful business man, and though he has made his farms pay, he could undoubtedly have made far more money with less work if he had put up some sort of factory or had gambled on the Stock Exchange. It is unreasonable to expect to do as well as Rayner as a farmer unless you are confident you would have been as successful in business as he was before he took up farming. Rayner did not go on as a business man because it did not interest him: he had conceived an original idea of making a self-contained little world on the land, and Mr. Bell tells us why he succeeded. Rayner started by realising that the contours of the ground on the farm he chose made it surprisingly immune to late night frosts and that on that account it was likely to be particularly good for fruit. But being a business man, he realised that it was no good producing fruit or anything else unless you can sell it, and that the ordinary farmer is at the mercy of the middleman. There was a small milk-round attached to the farm, and Rayner rapidly extended this, undercutting his competitors and sending gaily painted motor vans far afield into the nearest towns, where consumers are not so tied to their dairyman by neighbourliness or habit. He selected particularly attractive-looking country boys and taught them salesmanship—no easy task—and with the milk they took butter, eggs, fruit, jam, vegetables and flowers, in fact whatever he could produce. In this way he soon learned what was most in demand and what most profitable and was able to develop his farm accordingly. Rayner's success has therefore been very largely due to cutting out the middleman, by which means he not only gets better prices but is almost sure of selling his produce even during a glut.

* * *

Mr. Bell gives a very vivid picture of the world Rayner has made and the changes which have followed its establishment, and contrasts it most skilfully with the world of the best sort of traditional farmer, who though anything but revolutionary, can be quite up to date on his own lines. And we are given also the attitudes of the local people to the innovator.

> At first he had been a harmless crank. Now he was, to the hunting people wire; to labouring people employment; to milk retailers a man taking advantage of capital to compete with them to his advantage; and numbers of farmers sided with them.

And to the delightful ladies laying out their replica of an Elizabethan garden in the grounds of Thrush Hall, who had chosen to live in the perfect quiet unbroken atmosphere of traditional England, he meant asbestos bungalows and an endless stream of vans and lorries dashing to and fro. You cannot have an omelette without breaking eggs, and Rayner's omelette of prosperity meant changing the face of the clay-cold fields and planting a population as well as trees. The notion of shooting and hunting was alien and repulsive: he killed off the rabbits and the game and rejoiced when he sold the last of his horses and was gathering his hay crop into ramshackle motorvans and lorries. When machines broke down beyond repair he cheerfully hurled them away into some ditch where they lay unburied. There was a drive and a bustle and a break with the skilled crafts of the older generation such as thatching, hedging, making faggots and hurdles. The older men were needed for some jobs: when it came to draining a field for example. But in place of the ploughman and his team there were masked figures spraying the loganberries, men grafting apples, budding roses, and overhead conveyors carrying manure from the concrete and chromium-plated cowsheds. Mr. Bell is sufficiently impartial, and sufficiently an artist, to show us just what has been lost. It is not merely the partridge shooting. We are given a picture of old Brown, a sort of Iden out of *Amaryllis at the Fair*, who grafted the wild crabs in the hedgerows with his favourite apples and cabbage roses on the briars. When he was offered a record price for his sheep and for his fields of kale he exclaimed: "Sell my sheep! How am I to get a flock like that together again?" So the sheep ate the kale while their value dropped. Such farms are falling from stagnation into decay and it would be positively wicked, because the old ways arouse a nostalgic longing in us for the days of our childhood, to let them blind us to the vitality and happiness and prosperity that Rayner's idea brings with it. Yet we must not overlook that Rayner is more of an autocrat than the old farmer and that some of the monotony of factory work accompanies the change. Though the system is not universally applicable, there might be a Rayner in every district, serving every town. And though it needed a man with exceptional capacities to initiate such an organised economic unit, his experience is now available to help suitable men to repeat in other districts what he has done in Suffolk. Another hundred such direct marketing farms would mean about fifteen thousand more men employed on the land, many of them at higher wages than agricultural labourers. Thus though I began with a note of caution, I end with a call for recruits.

DAVID GARNETT

FICTION *from* **JONATHAN CAPE'S** *list* GENERAL

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JAMES CURTIS

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JONATHAN CAPE 30 BEDFORD SQUARE LONDON

NEW NOVELS

No Escape. By RANDALL SWINGLER. *Chatto and Windus.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Famine. By LIAM O'FLAHERTY. *Gollancz.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

The Great and the Goods. By IVOR BROWN. *Hamish Hamilton.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

This is Sedition Week. Three novels that everyone can enjoy, and all three strongly tainted with subversive opinion, which is such a comfort. It is quite extraordinary the way that Left fiction is cornering the market, turning every lending library, in spite of itself, into a Left Book Club, while the Fascists, like the Nazis, haven't a novelist to their name. Hitherto, Mr. Swingler has confined himself to poetry, and we are again put in mind of at least one of the advantages that this preparation confers, granted talent, on the budding novelist. The perfunctory, picture-post-card description of natural objects is dispensed with, and England —in this case—comes alive : it is a refreshing change.

In the major and better part of the book, the author gives a most subtle and unusual account of a large, pre-war estate, Longwood, and its lethargic inhabitants. The atmosphere of the house is oppressive in a peculiarly English way. It is only in this country that some people seem to be able to own land and yet cut themselves off from its significance, and that of the countryside, in every way except in their secret pride of ownership. Mr. Swingler has admirably caught this ritualistic existence, where life's movement seems merely a dreamy, failing momentum acquired from the past.

Mr. Earle, the spectral father, is very well seen :

> He was an almost entirely actionless man. He made a long and delicate toilet every morning, very rarely left the confines of Longwood, and then only in a suave swaying saloon car, and spent his evenings reading the prose of Sir Walter Raleigh, or modern romanticisms of the lives of Elizabethan buccaneers.

The mother is dryly conventional, and her position has been usurped by her husband's nurse, dog-faced Miss Seward, whose hypnotic yet demure depravity is possibly a little overdone. I have often noticed, incidentally, the popularity of Miss Seward's type in the earlier, sometimes unpublished works of young English writers. Miss Seward herself is a more credible example, but there is an arch type. Is she a sort of inheritance from Mr. Walpole, and Mr. de la Mare, or does she come straight from the 'nineties ? Or is there an innate passion in modern English literature for the moustached, evil governess, built like a boxer ? I can always recognise her, in spite of the ever-failing light in her ever-airless room at the top of some vast, dilapidated country mansion, by her habit of ceaselessly eating. To return, it is against this background that the sons, Hugh and Alan, are maintaining a desultory rivalry at self-invented games, comforted by their half-sister Sonia, when Rolf, the local parson's son, comes to them as tutor. He is the chief character of the book ; through him the village makes an appearance in contrast to Longwood, and one is presented with a completer world. There are extraordinarily sensitive pictures of the young country people, and their elaborate flirtations. The old, tiny village drunkard, Ordy Pike, is a terrifying creature. He suspects Rolf's father of having caused the death of an evicted tenant, and as the procession moves out into the graveyard, he darts from behind a tombstone, stumbling and yelling beside the Vicar :

> Look at bloody Parson dancin' orf to bury the por ol' man 'e murdered. Eh coom on all you people, 'ere 'e is, 'ere's the ol' barstard that turns folk out o' their 'ouses and tells 'em to sin no more.

A quantity of characters are convincingly introduced, and it is only toward the end of the novel that one finds that the author hasn't quite known what to do with them all. This, however, is a technical fault which experience will help Mr. Swingler to overcome, just as he will overcome a typical tendency to paint his adults so sharply black or white. Rolf becomes connected with the only emotional reality in Hugh's life, and the finest pages of all deal with the transformation created by their tutor in the children's lives. The author invests Hugh's growing self-awareness with an astonishingly delicate and complex beauty. Unfortunately, these passages are too long to quote. Against a summer landscape, exquisitely observed, he evokes to the full the horrors, as well as the exaltations, of sensitive childhood. Eventually Mr. Earle dies, Longwood breaks up, and the two boys leave. Rolf marries Sonia, the war comes, and he allows himself to be browbeaten into enlisting. He is discovered distributing subversive literature, and is punished as I am sure such cases often are.

Before concluding, I should add that I have not followed every step of Mr. Swingler's complicated narrative, and have given it entirely from my own viewpoint. On the other hand, I think that the story, as framework, is decidedly awkward, and there is little doubt that his cast is excessive. The machinery of the novel is most amateurish. But I hope I have conveyed something of my admiration for his gifts. They are such as may one day place him, with Christopher Isherwood and a few others, among the most interesting novelists of his generation.

Famine, like everything its author writes, is a *tour de force*. Just as the apprentice jolts one about, Mr. O'Flaherty carries one smoothly and powerfully along by means of his extraordinary technical ability. I must confess, however, that although this is one of the best novels of his that I have read, I still prefer the first, brilliant, short stories, which I suspect to be his true medium. Although he can portray the diversities of human character with apparent validity, the whole tone of *Famine*, for instance, is of such a single and invarying violence that its tragedy seems to defeat itself, to become almost burdensome. Agreed that it is a rare feat to be able to prolong the intensity suitable in a short story to the length of a novel, its advisability is questionable. It is like touring in a car geared for racing. Off one flies, delighted, only to turn into an apprehensive hunchback an hour later, whizzing disconsolately along, and hardly able to think, or even feel. Indeed, when Mr. O'Flaherty is at the wheel, one cannot believe that one will ever, through the blight-bearing mists, see anything again but dead dogs and dying peasants. He is inclined to make his readers, like his older characters, resign themselves to disaster.

The book tells of the fearful Irish potato famines of 1846–8, the helplessness of the people, the folly of their leaders, and the inhumanity of their exploiters. Among these must be numbered not only the English Government with its soldiers, and the absentee landlords with their agents, but the Irish shopkeepers themselves. The actual scene is here confined to a single, mountainous valley, where the ruin of Ireland is crystallised in the descent of the Kilmartin family from comparative prosperity to almost complete extinction. Mr. O'Flaherty has drawn the figures of the father, Brian, and of his son's wife, Mary, with ardent sympathy, and it is in their spirit and courage that he provides the only contrast. Their struggle is against much. There is the grudging soil, and the storms. There is Chadwick, the drunken, crazed agent, who forgives no debts. There are the relief committees who muddle, and quarrel amongst themselves, as do the Protestant and Catholic clergy. There is the miser Hynes, who profiteers with American meal after the arrival of the Blight, and, lastly, there is famine and plague. Frequent deaths mean ridiculous expense from wakes, which are vividly and fascinatingly described. To die costs more than to live. The Blight itself can be seen at work, and its second visit, when the family scramble down the hill to watch their final destruction, spreading in little brown spots, is one of the most pitiful incidents of all. The one hope for the peasants was to emigrate to America, and this Mary, with her husband and child, at last contrives to do. As they leave, they see Irish produce still being exported to England, guarded by troops, while Ireland herself had become a waste. I have suggested that Mr. O'Flaherty makes one over-resigned, and I think it is true. It is a pity, because complete resignation is what none but ecclesiastical authors could, or should, wish to inspire. Nevertheless, let no one imagine that *Famine* is not an exceedingly readable, and often moving and exciting volume.

Straight Socialist propaganda, like all propaganda, is like carrying Nazis to Londonderry. Capably turned out, entertaining works of fiction, such as Mr. Ivor Brown's, get at quite another audience. The great marble-bosomed men and women who stride around Harrods, putting creditable purchases irrevocably down on unquestionable accounts. Home they pound, Bolshie-haters every one, settle down to *The Great and the Goods*, and before they know it, sedition is at work. For Mr. Brown's book is meant to be funny, and frequently is, but the criticism implied is as incisive as it is merited. It is a diverting satire on what Mr. Spender calls " the politics of personal ambition," and what the late Lord Birkenhead extolled in some such scrumptious words as " the glittering prizes still to be won by young men whose swords are sharp."

Dr. Edgar Chirrup runs a College of Triumphant Living. Behind its exuberantly respectable and eupeptic catchwords, it is

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Alison Uttley

The author of *The Country Child* has again dipped into her early memories. Here are the scents and sounds of the farm and countryside, and the intimate revealings of a child's mind. 7/6

Men are Like Animals
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'For goodness' sake, have a look at Miss Boyle. Forgo your weekly library steak.'—*Morning Post*. 'Has in every case, not only the exquisite surface precisions, but also the latent potencey of poetry.'—*Observer*. 'I have no hesitation in saying that it should be regarded by discriminating readers as an event.'—*Sunday Times*. 7/6

Eve's Doctor
a novel by Signe Toksvig

'A theme very much to the point to-day—the influence of religion, and in particular of the priesthood, on private lives and on scientific progress.'—*John O'London's*. 'An incisiveness of detail not too common even in realistic novels of to-day—noteworthy.'—*Times Literary Supplement*. 7/6

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a novel by Edward Thompson

A fine novel of adventure in Burma, where, in 'unadministered territory' inhabited by head-hunters, an Englishman, Rajah Gabriel, has made himself a precarious kingdom. A story rich in its characters and incidents, glowing with descriptions of Burma's extraordinary beauty. 7/6

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a novel by Henry Dickson

'An informal, tentative and sometimes very amusing travel book. It gives an agreeable view of modern Greek life, politely and humorously written.'—*The Times*. 7/6

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a school to teach what every young Tory knows by instinct—how by hooks, looks and crooks to get on. Only the grander professions are thought of, and several of these are minutely examined. In the Church, for example, the study of emoluments is advocated, since these vary to the point of madness. There are splendid tips for clever, despondent curates in suggested theses: "Surrealism and the Christian Mythos," "Freud and Faith."

I think that Mr. Brown might have made more effective hay of the Stage, and that he himself, as biographer, sometimes copies to excess his hero's florid and jocose style. This can be rather wearying. But the Doctor's advice to aspiring politicians seems irreproachable. I am no expert in the moral and intellectual contortions necessary to success in the House, but the counsel given must be good enough if it is as sensible as the following telegram. It is in answer to a young poet just down from Oxford who desired to know on which side to butter his bread, and if the mention of the poetic chances of Fascism seems absurd, it is only that the Doctor leaves no stone unturned:

> My terms as stated. No reductions possible. Cut out Anglo-Catholics. That market now past the best. I am bear of Eliot but bull of Auden, Lewis & Co. Be Fascist or Communist. Perhaps big chance for Fascist poetry coming, but Marx and Spender much most promising investment at the moment.

BRIAN HOWARD

ADMIRABLE ARTIFICIALITY

Collected Poems. By SACHEVERELL SITWELL, with a long Introductory Essay by EDITH SITWELL. *Duckworth.* 15*s.*

In the long introductory essay to her brother's poems, Edith Sitwell remarks that "it has been held of late, by the hoards of persons who cling round and impede the movements of the arts, that poetry need not be written by a man who knows his *métier*. It is necessary only that he should take an interest in Left-wing politics, the housing problem, or the works of Marx for him to become, automatically, a poet." This view of poetry probably has been held by some people and Miss Sitwell is quite right to protest against it. It is significant though that, having refuted propaganda in poetry, she does not maintain that Sacheverell Sitwell's philosophy, thought or subject-matter is superior to Left-wingism in verse. She does not base her brother's claim on what he writes about, but on how he writes: "Mr. Sitwell's technical achievement as a poet is certainly amongst the greatest produced in the last hundred and fifty years."

For the rest, this introduction is appreciation rather than criticism. Miss Sitwell does not so much judge poems as write prose poems about them, which sometimes puzzle and sometimes really add to one's appreciation. All the business about vowels and consonants is paraphrase really: "Day seems stretching for ever, and the 'pe' of 'grapes' gives a roundness, a bloom like that on the ripe vines." Well, this is a description of Mr. Sitwell's effects translated into terms of Miss Sitwell's effects.

Nevertheless, Miss Sitwell's preface is valuable, because, although she supplies the reader with no standard by which to judge Sacheverell Sitwell's poems, she is an excellent guide to the best poems. With unerring taste she selects many of the best lines in the book to illustrate her essay.

When one turns to the poems themselves, the feeling that Miss Sitwell has picked out nearly all the plums is rather disconcerting. The reader, overwhelmed by Mr. Sitwell's "vowel-technique," is bound to admit that this does not carry him easily through nearly six hundred pages. He is forced to decide for himself what exactly are the merits and defects of Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell's poetry; why it is so ravishing at times, and at times so boring.

To me it seems that the clue to this poetry lies in its artificiality, which gives it a peculiar though important position to which the term "great" (used by Miss Sitwell) cannot be applied. These poems have, with rare exceptions, no immediate contact with experience; they are nearly always reflections of some other artist's (usually a painter's) reaction to experience. Sometimes they reflect a fixed habit of perception in Mr. Sitwell's mind which forms a barrier between his poetry and his own immediate experiences.

Beauty we get often—beautiful images and sounds—but it is a beauty re-created from something that is already beautified, a poem, a classic piece of sculpture, a painting by El Greco, some aesthetic experience or else the beauty and charm of a pose; the pose, of course, being Mr. Sitwell's stylised way of looking at things. My argument is that Mr. Sitwell seems to stylise his perceptions not in art but in life when he is actually perceiving, so that his poems do not have the impact of life but they reflect a fixed attitude towards life.

> In among the apple trees
> And on their echoing golden roofs
> A singing shower rides on the breeze,
> And prints the grass with golden hoofs.

This is a fair example of Mr. Sitwell's earlier manner. Compare it with almost any lines, however crude, from D. H. Lawrence's poems, and one sees the difference between experience immediately communicated and experience communicated through the charming pose of an aesthetic personality:

> The rabbit presses back her ears,
> Turns back her liquid, anguished eyes
> And crouches low; then with wild spring
> Spurts from the terror of *his* oncoming.

This is not good Lawrence, but I find it much more interesting than the more skilfully written lines by Mr. Sitwell.

The trouble with poetry that is written under no sort of pressure from life—whether of thought, observation, or emotional experience—is that it lacks those most reassuring essentials of a work of art, a beginning and an end. To put it crudely, one never feels certain that Mr. Sitwell's poems are going to stop: poetry rooted in experience one knows must stop, because compulsions of feeling in life are always limited; but the poetic habit of mind can go on spinning out its web for ever. Mr. Sitwell's poems go on and on with beautiful noises, beautiful pictures reflected from other pictures, no pressure of thought, no metrical energy.

Beauty—which the Common Reader so sighs for—is really only one of the effects of art, but it is certainly one of the most delightful. Mr. Sitwell weaves it out in great quantities, and for this one must be grateful. Nor does one tire of the exquisite complications of his poetry at its best. *Agamemnon's Tomb* bears reading again and again. Poetry of such artifice as this lives in the world of *Endymion*.

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WAGNER'S STURM UND DRANG

The Life of Richard Wagner. Vol. II. (1848–1860). By ERNEST NEWMAN. *Cassell.* 30*s.*

We have, as Mr. Newman admits in his preface, had to wait far too long for the second volume of a biography which combines, in an admirably fluent style, the last word in erudition with perfect readability. Until still more letters are released, this book must be regarded as definitive; and even when they are, it is doubtful whether Mr. Newman's views on the main problems of Wagner's life will require much readjustment, so thoroughly does he know and understand both the man and the artist. This second volume deals with what many people regard as the most interesting period of Wagner's life, i.e., that in which action played a considerable part and during which the artist is seen emerging from the transition state of *Tannhäuser*, through the dawn of his later style in the second act of *Lohengrin*, down to the first stages of the *Ring* and the compositions of *Tristan*.

Disentangled by Mr. Newman's adroit fingers, the threads of the Dresden revolution of 1848 are fascinating to follow. Wagner himself never sought, in later life, to minimise the part he had taken in the riots, though his admirers have tried to do so, and their task has been made easier, in the first place, by the fact that Wagner was throughout screened by Röckel. The outcome of the revolution was a disillusionment to Wagner, but the final blow to his political dreams was given by the triumph of Napoleon III: after the latter's *coup d'état* he turned away from politics for ever.

Mr. Newman's treatment of the vexed question of Minna and the two "love" affairs in which Wagner indulged at this period is distinguished by common sense. He points out that "during the gestation of a big work the temperature of his whole being was raised: some of the abnormal heat overflowed upon the woman who happened to show him most sympathy at the moment. . . . When the work was completed—as in the Mathilde-*Tristan* case—or faded into the background—as in the Jessie-*Wieland* case—the scales gradually fell from his eyes, and he came to see the woman not as an ideal, but as an ordinary reality." In other words, Wagner was a typical romantic in his emotional life, as in his art. Whether he actually committed adultery either with Jessie Laussot or with Mathilde Wesendonk is unlikely ever to be known, and in any case is immaterial—though Minna must be pardoned for not thinking so: Wagner was genuinely devoted to the most unsuitable woman whom he had married, and he remained devoted to all that was admirable in her. At the same time, the poor woman did undoubtedly have a much more difficult life than she had bargained for, though even from the financial point of view Wagner's position was never at this time desperate. And here Mr. Newman brings out the interesting psychological point that, though he was invariably grateful to anyone who gave money to help the production of his operas, he as invariably resented mere charity. Minna, however, could not be expected to appreciate this distinction. Hence the other constant cause of friction between the two.

Another crucial question that faces Wagner's biographer at this period is that of the composer's relations with Liszt. Too much, Mr. Newman evidently feels, has lately been said in favour of Liszt's behaviour and against that of Wagner. He does not seek to minimise Liszt's constant generosity and championship, but points out that so inadequate a performance as the Weimar production of *Lohengrin* cannot be held—as it often has been—to have "made" Wagner, in any sense. What it did do, however, was to destroy the legend that Wagner's operas were essentially unproducible. But Liszt's service, on this particular occasion, was in any case rather less important than on other less famous ones; one may, however, disagree with Mr. Newman that Cornelius was right in asserting that Liszt climbed to fame on Wagner's shoulders. The greatest pianist of his day had no need of any ladder save that of his own virtuosity, not to speak of his genius as a composer which, it seems to me, Mr. Newman subtly denigrates, besides refusing to acknowledge Wagner's indebtedness to Liszt in the matter of harmonic innovations. Yet, in the matter of this uneasy friendship, Mr. Newman shrewdly picks out Princess Wittgenstein—that stuffy, pretentious, hysterical woman—as the real villain. Her hostility to Wagner probably proceeded from jealousy for her lover's sake; in any case, she seems to have managed to put as many spokes in his wheel as she could. One doubts, however, whether the friendship would have lasted, even unhindered: the characters of the two men had only faults in common—a very bad foundation for a stable affection, since familiarity will in such cases always breed contempt. Superficial disadvantages made each irritated by the other: both Liszt and Wagner were bounders, though of slightly different kinds.

Mr. Newman devotes a most instructive and detailed chapter to the various metamorphoses through which the *Ring* went, and shows that all the inconsistencies that have been noted in the definitive poem were due to the superimposition of the various versions which Wagner wrote. Incidentally, most readers will, I think, be surprised to learn that the break in the composition of the music occurred *at the end* of the second act of *Siegfried*, not in the middle of it, as is generally supposed. The reason of the long interruption must be obvious to anyone familiar with the workings of the artistic imagination; Mr. Newman describes it as follows: "For a long time before the summer of 1857 a deep-seated instinct had been driving him more and more inwards upon himself. The outer world was becoming daily less real to him: the mystic within him was taking more and more complete possession of him." The *Ring* music was not yet ready, not yet matured in his subconsciousness; meanwhile the horrors and pettinesses of life drove him back on his inveterate romanticism, with which the philosophy of Schopenhauer and the beauty of Mathilde Wesendonk miraculously chimed. And the story of Tristan and Isolde, which he had lighted upon some time before, was the perfect material for such a treatment. The sumptuous beauty, solitude, and quiet of Venice did the rest. There he rested completely from the fatigues of reality, and thought out to the end his complex relations with his wife and Mathilde. The result was a letter to Minna containing the following very significant passage, which probably indicates the truth of the whole affair, a truth the delicacy and intangibility of which was not within Minna's limited grasp: "For you, a definite blame always should and must be borne by a definite person: you do not understand the nature of things and Fate, but simply think that if this person or thing had never been, everything would have happened otherwise."

We leave Wagner (it is to be hoped, not for long) in Paris, preparing for the siege which in the end took the form of the famous production of *Tannhäuser*. The prospect of another

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BASIL BLACKWELL

struggle with the Parisian powers-that-were did not attract the weary composer: he felt that no one in that city could possibly understand what he had to express. Baudelaire, first and foremost, was to prove him wrong. EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

ANABASIS

Anabasis. A POEM BY ST. J. PERSE. With a translation into English by T. S. ELIOT. *Faber and Faber.* 5s.

Mr. Eliot has a curiously secretive mind. His translation of St. J. Perse's *Anabase*, which appeared first in 1930, and is reissued now in a cheaper edition, was designed to bring to public notice a poem which in Mr. Eliot's opinion is "one of the most remarkable of this generation." Yet in his preface Mr. Eliot refrains from divulging a single fact about the author or his work—except that he is "an authority on the Far East." He quotes the analysis of two other critics, but adds almost nothing of his own. Moreover, he makes a number of mistakes in translation which will not help the reader for whom this edition, with French and English on opposite pages, is presumably meant.

St. Jean Perse was born in 1887. In 1911 he published *Éloges*, poems of his childhood in the West Indies. Other works—besides *Anabase* (1923)—have appeared under the name St. Léger Léger. He holds a position at the Quai D'Orsay similar to that of Sir Robert Vansittart in the Foreign Office here. He has lived in China. That, in the brief time at a reviewer's disposal, is all I have been able to discover.

From *Anabase* itself we see that its author is in the Claudel tradition. Perhaps it is only accident that, for both, a life of poetry and diplomacy, the exile of Asia, has been important. Poetically, they have both been influenced by the Chinese to an extent which is considerably more perceptible in the original than in translation. M. Perse owes as much to Claudel as Claudel does in his turn to Rimbaud—more indeed. We can imagine a Claudel who would have written poetry if Rimbaud had never existed, but *Anabase* without *Connaissance de l'Est* and *Cinq Grandes Odes* would be improbable.

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Comme quand dans le ciel plein de nuit avant que ne claque le premier feu de foudre,
Soudain le vent de Zeus dans un tourbillon plein de pailles et de poussières avec la lessive de tout le village! . . .

So the second of *Cinq Grandes Odes* begins. The form taken from Rimbaud and the Bible, the mirage of Eastern cities and landscapes seen by a Western eye, the equivocation of time in which present and past meet and the word Zeus is followed by the detail of "la lessive de tout le village," set the note of all Claudel's poetry. *Anabase* comes straight out of it. (Mr. Eliot, too, has benefited: *Waste Land, part V*, "After the torch-light red on sweaty faces, After the frosty silence in the gardens, After the agony, etc. . . . thunder of spring over distant mountains . . .."). Where Claudel and Perse differ chiefly, I suspect, apart from magnitude, is in their religion. You will find small trace in *Anabase* of the religious spirit which prevails in Claudel's work. M. Perse may also be a devout Catholic, but his poetic accent is subdued. Claudel's canticle becomes in his hands a lay form, less personal, less incantatory, less stressed. The title of his poem, it will be noticed, is Greek, the situation Asia; and the journeys, the building of cities and departures in the desert, suggest ancient civilisations before our own. Distance in time and space is interwoven with curiously closer detail. With its hovering scenes and anonymous voices *Anabase* might perhaps be called a prose oratorio in the sense that Mr. William Walter's *Belshazzar's Feast* is an oratorio; the incantation is purely modern. The romanticism, too—fixed on the wide landscapes of Mongolia or Turkestan—strikes one as being peculiarly of the present day. It is as though M. Perse had taken the classical narrative of conquest—Xenophon's, for example—and purged it of all except its moments of poetic intensity, which are made to resound almost musically. To give any idea of this strange, puzzling yet immediately moving work, I must quote at considerable length. The city builders:

In the great fresh noise of the yonder bank, the blacksmiths are masters of their fires! The cracking of whips in the new streets unloads whole wainsful of unhatched evils. O mules, our shadows under the copper sword! four restive heads knotted to the fist make a living tuft against the blue. The founders of asylums meet beneath a tree and find their ideas for the choice of situations. They teach me the meaning and purpose of the buildings: front adorned, back blind; the galleries of laterite, the vestibules of black stone and the pools of clear shadow for libraries; cool places for the chemical products. And then come the bankers blowing into their keys. And already in the streets a man sang alone, one of those who plant on their brow the cipher of their god. . . .

Solitude! the blue egg laid by a great sea-bird, and the bay-leaves at morning all laden with gold lemons! Yesterday it was! The bird made off!

To-morrow the festivals and tumults, the avenues planted with podded trees, and the dustmen at dawn bearing away huge pieces of dead palm trees, fragments of giant wings . . . To-morrow the festivals,

the election of harbour-masters, the voices trilling in the suburbs and under the moist incubation of storms,

the yellow town casque'd in shade, with the girls' camiknickers hanging at the windows.

At the third lunation, those who kept watch on the hilltops folded their canvas. The body of a woman was burnt in the sands. And a man strode forth at the threshold of the desert—profession of his father: dealer in scent-bottles.

M. Perse succeeds in making that fusion of the present with antiquity which Mr. Ezra Pound has botched in the *Cantos* and which Mr. Eliot himself only occasionally achieves. How admirably here the forges across the river, the mules, the architects are followed by bankers blowing in their keys! And further on the dustmen (we think of the rattle under our window) carry off palm boughs, "fragments of giant wings"—how well that image impresses the unfamiliarity of the palm tree! (Compare Claudel's "the colossal gates in the city wall like elephants.") Then the festivals and the hint of the modern scene. "Caleçons" is rendered by Mr. Eliot, characteristically, as "camiknickers": a doubtful addition to the original.

The merit of his version all through is that it combines exactness with good, and often beautiful, English. He has, however, made mistakes. Here are two:

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p. 41. Le vieillard bouge des paupières dans la lumière jaune ; la femme s'étire sur son ongle.

The old man stirs his eyelids in the yellow light ; the woman stretches herself from nail to nail. (Should be, " the woman polishes her nails.")

p. 67. L'hermite orné de mains de fille.

The hermit bedecked with the hands of girls. (But the hands are his : " the hermit graced with a girl's hands.")

Other examples : p. 25 " aisselle," on its second appearance, means not " armpit " but the fork of a branch ; p. 67 " joueur aux goblets," must be, not " player of the game of goblets " but " thimblerigger " or " conjurer." I have noted half a dozen similar inaccuracies, for which there is no place in this review. The introduction ends strangely :

> What inaccuracies remain are due to my own wilfulness, and not to my ignorance, which the author has corrected ; and not to the author's ignorance, for he has, I can testify, a sensitive and intimate knowledge of the English language.

It seems an ingenuous way of pretending that Mr. Eliot's French and M. Perse's English are better than in fact they are. As a whole the translation is so good that the few stupidities surprise and shock ; a pity, for *Anabase* is a remarkable work which deserves readers in England. G. W. STONIER

THE TOP HAT

The Pace of the Ox. By MARJORIE JUTA. *Constable.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

This is the first full-length life of Paul Kruger to appear in English ; and even thirty odd years after his death, with the tragedy of Haile Selassie still salting raw memories, one understands the reluctance of biographers. " Oom Paul," godly, patriarchal and illiterate in his top hat, is a forbidding figure. The hat itself, so seldom removed from the heavy, ugly yet faintly benign head of the Dopper fundamentalist, becomes unapproachably and grotesquely deified. And there it sits on his statue in Pretoria with the top left open by his wife's wish, it is said—though not by Miss Juta—so that the birds may drink the rain water that collects in it. Then there is the Gladstonian weakness for having aces slipped unremittingly up the sleeve by the Deity ; there is the dull, insurmountable pride ; and such Scotch Sunday humour as the comedy of the wretched English High Commissioner's ball which had to be hurriedly turned into a Sacred Secular Concert to conciliate the obstinate and surly old Calvinist. Momentarily turning from the hero all continental Europe fêted and excused itself from helping when the time came, one understands a certain timidity before the stolid domestic figure.

The obvious course is Miss Juta's—sympathy rising to panegyric, the insistence on the grand old man. It is rather monotonous and definitely one-sided. A man of liberal mind like President Burghers, for example, begins by being " brilliant," becomes " unstable " and is finally " disloyal." His crime ? His pace was quicker than the ponderous progress of the Kruger Ox. If anyone was disloyal it was Kruger, who tried to persuade the Boers to refuse payment of Burgher's taxes. It depends upon how your political emotions run. To Kruger, the patriarch, brooding over his Old Testament and seeing himself as the leader of another Israel, the Transvaal was " my country " ; it was the promised land of the Great Trek. Everything which did not come from his most conservative sect of pioneer farmers who had won their land from the natives, endured the struggle with the bush, massacre and raid, was a threat to the tribe. People of the wilderness, urged or driven there, they claimed it for their own and to exclude who and what they would. Deeply convinced of Divine inspiration, bred in the most rigid and primitive Calvinism which rejected even hymn-singing because it was " man-made," they fought for their isolation and independence and resisted the breath of liberalism and contact with the forces of the modern imperialist society as if they were the devil. When in doubt they could always pray for Divine guidance, and the Deity—Himself a farmer in the days of Eden—always advised them not to budge an inch. On this plane, Miss Juta can make her heroic claim. We can admire but hardly like.

The most interesting Kruger and the least known is the boy and the young man. It amounts to a change of hat. Remove the top hat and replace it with the slouch hat of the hunter and the cornet on commando, and a more malleable man appears. When the Boer is a horseman, when the commando rides off and the guerilla bands are in the mountains, when men, women, and children go into laager and wait for Zulu or Basuto attack within the closed ring of waggons, the story fills the heart. Kruger was young in the days of the Great Trek when his people went off *en masse* to find a new life. At thirteen he was fighting. And when he was not fighting he was a hunter. He met the lion and the elephant in the virgin veld. The story of the amputated thumb is famous. His adventures as a hunter had something of the fabulous. There was the wounded buffalo cow which charged and fell with him into a swamp :

> His rifle lay useless in the water. As she butted at him, one of her great horns stuck deep in the holding mud. Seizing the other in his big, powerful hands he tried to force her nose under water to drown her. Then began a herculean struggle. The man, with every ounce of strength in his body, sought to lower the neck which is capable of tossing a man as high in the air as the tallest tree in the bushveld. He struggled and pulled, while she struggled and fought. At one moment he actually straddled her neck, and rode her trying to use all his weight.

But her hair was slippery with slime, and while he was trying to get out his knife the mud-blinded animal got out and ran away from her enemy. He did not get her but he went after her and got two of the herd !

And so the young man grew up, married, lost his young wife, maddened by grief went off into the wilderness where searchers heard him crying, singing and praying. He returned calmed, and married again; child after child was born and the patriarch appeared. He becomes, by the extremity of his passion for independence, the quintessential Voortrekker, the national pillar. His own tragedy is his people's, and he died in exile before the new and happier act began. There is the struggle against Johannesburg and the foreign city dwellers, with its deceptive victories. It was town against country elevated to the heroic plane ; to get a concession from him politically was like trying to get blood out of a stone.

It is easy to point out the obstinacy, the inconsistencies of speech and behaviour. And yet, as Miss Juta shows, Kruger was really all of a piece. He did not change but became more massive with the times and was incapable of those adjustments which even then men like Smuts were prepared to make. There was in the end something affecting about his simplicity, something

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of the rough Biblical wilderness in his piety. He was entirely without pretence. The educated might smile when he refused to sit down at the German Emperor's banquet until grace was said, but they could not fail to be impressed by the moral force of this uncouth old farmer who ruled a country from the verandah of his farm. Miss Juta finds her way through the maze of Transvaal politics very skilfully; and the future biographer of more critical disposition will be indebted to her for the material her eulogy contains.

V. S. PRITCHETT

POPE'S PROSE

The Prose Works of Alexander Pope. The Earlier Works, 1711–1720. Collected and edited by NORMAN AULT. *Blackwell*. 30*s*.

When the Romantics put Pope temporarily out of vogue, they did his admirers an extremely important service: for it was with almost the excitement of a discovery—just at a time when the charm of Romantic poetry was beginning to wear off—that one realised the magnitude of his poetic gift and learned to appreciate the skill and sensitiveness that lay behind it. How refreshing, after the brilliant impetuous flights and disastrous headlong tumbles that characterise early nineteenth-century literature, were the productions of this calm and concentrated genius whose work, though it might often descend from poetry to the level of prose, at least never descended *beneath* that level—whose poorest poems had the dignity of sober logic! And then, at his finest, how freely and exuberantly could Pope ascend! Whereas, in Romantic verse, the poet seems to be aware of the effect that he is making, to wobble, Icarus-like, between heaven and earth, half-intoxicated by his own achievement, half-horrified by the awful and unplumbed depths of banality that yawn below him, in Pope the greatest felicities occur as a matter of course—the natural sequence of something that has gone before. There is no feeling of interruption or sense of strain. An exquisite decorum regulates the relationship of reader and author.

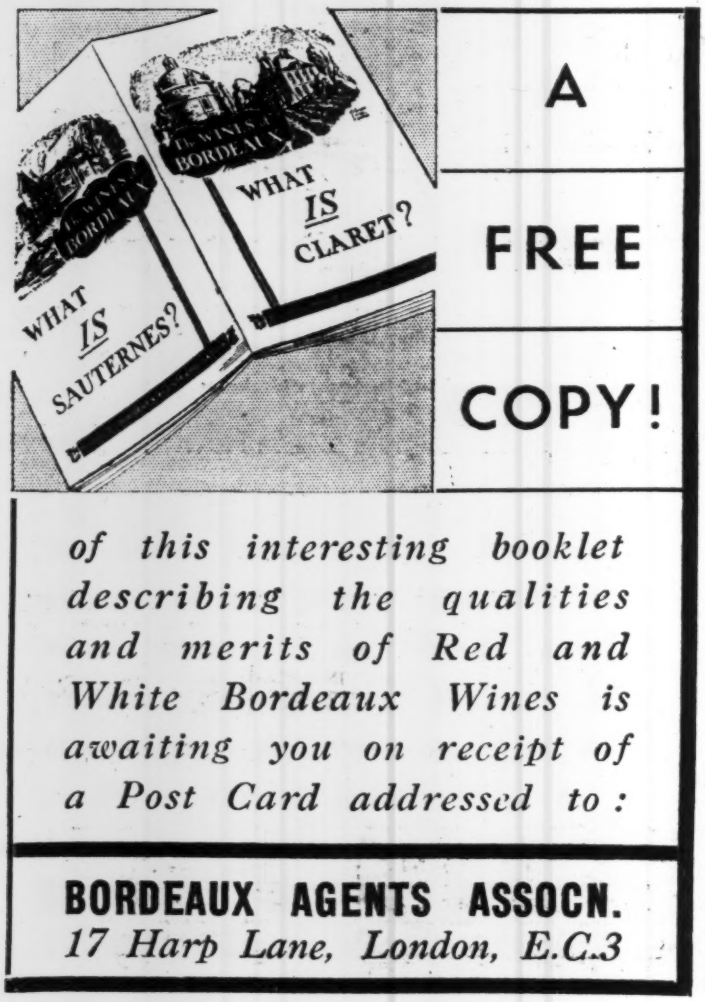
It would be a very inadequate lover of poetry who did not enjoy *Characters of Women*, *The Rape of the Lock*, the *Epistles*, at any rate the conclusion of *The Dunciad* and the superb lyric *To Mr. Gay, Congratulating Him on Finishing his House and Gardens*; and, surely, no attentive student of prose can have failed to admire the easy movement, melodious yet not too perceptible rhythm and comprehensive mastery of the English language that is revealed in the volumes of Pope's letters. Looking through Mr. Herbert Read and Mr. Bonamy Dobrée's *London Book of English Prose*, I see that, to illustrate Pope's epistolary aptitude, they have chosen only the celebrated and now slightly hackneyed letter (of which two separate versions exist) dealing with the fate of the unfortunate rustic lovers struck by lightning; while, myself, I should have preferred either the eloquent love letter to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu on her travels:

> The poetical manner in which you paint some of the scenes about you, makes me despise my native country, and sets me on fire to fall into the dance about your fountain in Belgrade-Village. I fancy myself, in my romantic thoughts and distant admiration of you, not unlike the man in the Alchymist, that has a passion for the queen of the fairies; I lie dreaming of you in moon-shiny nights, exactly in the posture of Endymion gaping for Cynthia in a picture; and with just such a surprise and rapture should I awake, if, after your long revolutions were accomplished, you should at last come rolling back again, smiling with all that gentleness and serenity peculiar to the moon and you; and gilding the same mountains from which you first set out on your solemn melancholy journey.

Or the description of a leisurely visit to Oxford:

> . . . I rid over hanging hills, whose tops were edged with groves, and whose feet watered with winding rivers, listening to the falls of cataracts below, and the murmuring of the winds above: the gloomy verdure of Stonor succeeded to these; and then the shades of the evening overtook me. The moon rose in the clearest sky I ever saw, by whose solemn light I paced on slowly, without company, or any interruption to the range of my thoughts. About a mile before I reached Oxford, all the bells tolled in different notes; the clocks of every college answered one another, and sounded forth (some in a deeper, some a softer tone) that it was eleven at night. All this was no ill preparation to the life I have led since, among those old walls, venerable galleries, stone porticos, studious walks, and solitary scenes of the university. . . . I conformed myself to the college hours, was rolled up in books, lay in one of the most ancient, dusky parts of the university, and was as dead to the world as any hermit of the desert. If anything was alive or awake in me, it was a little vanity. . . . For I found myself received with a sort of respect, which this idle part of mankind, the learned, pay to their own species: who are as considerable here, as the busy, the gay, and the ambitious are in your world.

In his collected edition of the *Prose Works of Alexander Pope* 1711–1720, Mr. Norman Ault (who has already earned our gratitude by an excellent anthology of *Seventeenth-century Verse*) does not include any letters written during that period, but confines himself to Pope's critical and controversial writings. His foreword is both scholarly and well balanced. Among the work that he prints, Mr. Ault includes "no more than six pieces" that were acknowledged by Pope on publication; others that "were stated to be his by contemporaries or have been ascribed to him by the scholarship of two centuries; yet others . . . now for the first time either definitely identified as his, or attributed to him with considerable—if perhaps differing—degrees of probability." In a review of this length it is impossible to do justice to the tact, intelligence and learning with which Mr. Ault has hunted down the various clues that suggest that such-and-such a pamphlet or lampoon may indeed be the product of Pope's vitriolic and perpetually agitated pen. From one point of view, Pope's was not an estimable character. He was exceedingly sensitive, exceedingly spiteful, uncommonly ready to take offence and suffered from what we should now call (in our convenient if sometimes extremely inaccurate modern jargon) an acute persecution mania. Physically unfortunate, he imagined that all his critics—and, when he grew really angry, a number of his friends—were leagued against him in sinister cabal. At this date, there is no need to expatiate on his crushing prose retort to Lord Hervey (when that volatile court-favourite had joined forces with Pope's former idol, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu) or to examine the merits of the incomparable portrait of Sporus. Pope lost in pride, happiness and love; but round "Lord Fanny's" neck he shackled a load of invective which the author of the *Memoirs* still carries and, no doubt, will continue to carry till the end of time. Less often admired are the successive onslaughts which Pope directed against the bookseller and publisher, Edmund Curll; and though Mr. Ault, here and there, seems inclined to apologise for these evidences of Pope's savage and acrimonious wit, there are few modern readers who—beginning, it may be, a little dubiously—will not laugh aloud as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"INVASION '14"

they study *A Full and True Account of a Horrid and Barbarous Revenge by Poison on the Body of Mr. Edmund Curll*, and *A Further Account* of the wretched man's "Deplorable Condition." Obviously, their literary content is very slight; but I imagine that the unlucky stationer must have winced and writhed when he read the phantasmagoric account of Pope's attempt to poison him and noted the ridiculous domestic details by which it is supposed to have been accompanied. The *Full and True Account* is good; yet the *Further Account* is, on the whole, even more entertaining. Suffering agonies from the venom which Pope had contrived to administer in a glass of sack, Curll first falls into a delirium—takes "a strange Fancy to run a Vomiting all over the House, and in the new Wash'd Dining Room," reads "Rochester's *bawdy Poems to his Wife*," gives "*Oldmixon* a *slap* on the *Chops*, and wou'd have kiss'd Mr. *Pemberton's* A—— *by Violence*"—then summons his regiment of industrious hacks to receive his last words. There is a delightful series of directions to a porter as to how his literary henchmen are to be discovered; and the pamphleteer next appends a description of the resultant Grub Street gathering which might serve as an account of a modern publisher's annual cocktail party:

> They no sooner enter'd the Room, but all of them show'd in their Behaviour some Suspicion of each other; some turning away their Heads with an Air of Contempt; others squinting with a leer that show'd at once Fear and Indignation, each with a haggard abstracted Mien, the lively Picture of *Scorn*, *Solitude* and *short Commons*. So when a Keeper feeds his hungry Charge, of Vultures, Panthers, and of *Lybian* Leopards, each eyes his fellow with a fiery Glare: High hung, the bloody Liver tempts their Maw. Or as a Housewife stands before her Pales, surrounded by her Geese. . . . Such Looks shot through the Room transverse, oblique, direct; such was the stir and din, till *Curll* thus spoke (but without rising from his Close-stool).

It is, as Mr. Ault rather sententiously remarks, an extremely interesting and illuminating fact that Pope's third onslaught against the unlucky Edmund Curll, *A Strange but True Relation How Edmund Curll of Fleet Street, Stationer, Out of an Extraordinary Desire of Lucre, went into Change Alley, and was converted from the Christian Religion by certain Eminent Jews: And how he was circumcis'd and initiated into their Mysteries*—"the most unpleasant of all his lampoons"—should have been "written at about the same time" as his "noble dedication" of *The Iliad*. Yet, if we understand Pope's character—the curious mixture of littleness and greatness, of poetic magnanimity and petty duplicity that made him what he was—this contrast may seem less striking than Mr. Ault, in his foreword, would appear to suggest. For Pope was compounded of spite and tenderness, of an emotional delicacy that expressed itself in his almost religious worship of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and the two Misses Blount, and of a nervous brutality that rode rough-shod over every feeling. The Dedication of *The Iliad* (as Mr. Ault justly observes) is "in the grave dignity of its utterance and the cadence of its rhythm, probably as fine a piece of prose writing as the eighteenth century can show." Moreover, it is a magnificent and solidly constructed essay in literary criticism. But both aspects—the noble and the ignoble, the finely restrained and the hysterically unbalanced—deserve consideration if we are to arrive at a just and impartial estimate of the character of Alexander Pope.

PETER QUENNELL

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The Lady and the Arsenic. By JOSEPH SHEARING. *Heinemann.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

"I regret," said the late Mr. Justice Avory in a summing-up, ". . . the pernicious practice which prevails of pandering to the prurient proclivities of the public by publishing, pictorially or otherwise, the lurid details of ghastly tragedy," etc., etc. And who shall say nay to a sentiment that vents itself in such cogent alliteration? Nevertheless, the practice persists; and here are two more volumes given over to re-telling the stories of *causes once célèbres*. In one, the job is well done; in the other, not.

Miss Duke has chosen four murder trials of the past twenty-five years, and summarised the proceedings and the stories behind them with understanding and a sound sense of proportion—although sometimes the triplicate recording of inquest, police-court and assize proceedings tends to fog the picture. The first of her stories, the singularly brutal slaughter in 1913 of a harmless shop-manager, Miss Bradfield, by two youths who tried ineffectively to make a Liverpool canal dispose of the corpse, is not of much interest: stupid bestiality never is. Another, of more recent happening, is the fairly familiar story of the murder of a girl on the Crumbles, near Eastbourne, by two local scamps named Field and Gray at the height of the holiday season in 1920. Here again there is no essential problem of motive, or doubt as to guilt. Even the frenzied attempts made after the trial by each, unknown to the other, to shift the guilt on to his associate, by producing new versions of what really happened, rouse no doubts and little pity. But the other two make more curious reading. One is the trial of Lieutenant Clark and Mrs. Fulham for the murder of Mr. Fulham at Meerut in 1913, and, side by side, the trial of certain Indian servants accused of murdering Mrs. Clark at the instigation of her husband. A *ténébreuse affaire*, if ever there was one. As the pattern of the accusations shows, these were "crimes of passion"; but in the case of the hapless Mr. Fulham, whose trusting attitude towards Clark is almost incredible, the process of slow, laborious poisoning puts the case in a class almost by itself. And the extracts from letters and diaries produced during the trial have much psychological interest. Mrs. Fulham's sharp distress at the cruel sufferings of her husband after her ineffectual attempts at despatching him is instantly followed by fresh plans and hopes to clinch the matter next time: the moral duplicity becomes virtually a doubling of personality. And a strange thing is that all these damning letters of hers were kept by Clark, ranged and numbered in a metal trunk which he left in her care, and that although she knew that trouble was afoot and there was still time to do something, she apparently forgot all about them. But in this story too, there is no element of doubt. In the fourth, a more obscure and forgotten case, there is plenty. This was the still mysterious murder of a five-year-old boy named Willie Starchfield in a suburban London railway-train early in 1914. His father, a Tottenham Court Road newsvendor, who, oddly enough, had been much in the public eye for his brave tackling of a lunatic Armenian murderer a year or so previously, was charged with the crime. There was no plausible motive, but he was of dubious character and there was some fairly good evidence of identification. This, however, was countered by rather stronger counter-identifications, and

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DRURY LANE. Careless Rapture. Wed., Sat.

DUCHESS. Ballet Rambert. Feb. 11.

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GARRICK. The Two Bouquets. Tu., Fri., Sat.

HIPPODROME. Mother Goose. W., Th., S., 2.

PLAYHOUSE. Whiteoaks. Wed., Th., Sat.

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Starchfield was acquitted—only to die two years later as a result of wounds caused by the said Armenian: an ill-starred man.

The Lady and the Arsenic is a very different book, and one is tempted to accuse the author himself, if not of murdering, at least of inflicting culpable homicide, on his subject. The story he has to tell is that of Marie Lafarge (*née* Cappelle), a classic in its kind for nearly a hundred years. At the age of twenty-four, within six months of her marriage to a needy ironmaster, in a remote corner of the Limousin, Mme. Lafarge was accused of having poisoned him with arsenic—and not at the first attempt. The case was one of those which, by freaks of circumstance, evoke violent partisanship, and the lady's cause was espoused by every right-minded Romantic of the 1840's in France. Even in the toxicology of the case there was a corresponding cleavage, and the Liberal chemist Raspail was pitted by the defence against the official expert, Orfila. To-day the medical evidence would probably have failed to prove to a jury that arsenic necessarily caused the death of Charles Lafarge: indeed, although Mr. Shearing does not mention this, some twelve years ago proceedings were taken (but not concluded) to revise the verdict of "guilty" in view of modern researches into arsenical poisoning. But "guilty" the verdict was; and Mme. Lafarge spent ten years in gaol, dying within a year of her merciful release by order of Napoleon III. She was clearly a woman of quite exceptional gifts of imagination and literary expression: the two published volumes of her correspondence, mostly from prison, with her spiritual adviser, relatives, friends and various literary partisans of considerable standing, really have charm and force. Guilty or not, she was a remarkable woman; and her story is all the more curious because she was, almost certainly, an illegitimate grand-niece (through her mother) of Louis-Philippe, who was then on the French throne.

Mr. Shearing, however, has chosen to write her troubled story "in the form of a novelette," and further remarks in his foreword that "the material refused to take any other form." Why, it is impossible to see. The strange thing is, not only the novelettish handling of the material, but the extraordinary prose style which Mr. Shearing has adopted for his narrative. Page after page reads exactly as if it had been translated, in a very stiff-jointed and unidiomatic way, from some sort of *feuilleton* reconstruction of the story made in a florid Second Empire style. Where passages from Mme. Lafarge's authentic correspondence are used, a comparison with the two volumes edited by Boyer d'Agen in 1893 shows the translation to be loose and infelicitous, and failing to do proper justice to a style which, if often highly romantic, is by no means trivial or incommunicable in English. The history of this unlucky, and possibly criminal, woman is a queer one; but it deserved to be told, even a century later, in a less queer way.

HAMISH MILES

IMPROPERTY

Property and Improperty. By JOHN A. HOBSON. *Gollancz.* 4s. 6d.

"Improperty" is a good word. By it Mr. Hobson describes those forms of ownership which arise not from man's labour or activity of mind, but from predatory or monopolistic activities of any sort. He sets out to trace the development of improperty from its earliest forms in primitive society, where it appears as sheer theft or robbery, as distinct from the product of labour, but is thought of the more highly upon that account, because successful theft from outside the social group is the surest source of social prestige. From that beginning Mr. Hobson traces the subtler manifestations of improperty in the world of to-day, where it appears, in the complex relations of modern production, inextricably mingled with true property arising out of useful service. Therewith he attempts to lay down, in terms based on psychological alias, the appropriate spheres for public and private ownership. Public ownership should apply over the entire field of standardised consumption, which coincides broadly with the field of monopolistic improperty under present conditions. At the same time the State, bearing its action on the essentially social nature of production and value, should so act by a variety of means as to redress the inequality of incomes, which is the main cause of consumption lagging behind the power to produce. Capitalism as a system should be replaced, not by complete socialisation, but by a mixed system of public and regulated private ownership and operation of production.

A good deal of this has been said by Mr. Hobson in his previous books; but he has not, I think, previously combined the ingredients in the same way. Nor, certainly, has he previously related his ideas so clearly as in this volume to current world affairs. It is an essential part of his thesis that the growing influence of improperty, and the growing restrictions to which its owners are driven for the protection of these monopolies, lie at the root, not only of class-conflict within the nations and of the rise of Fascism as the reply of improperty to proletarian attacks, but also of the international "line-up" now so manifestly showing itself between the forces of Fascism and of proletarian democracy. Mr. Hobson lays special stress on the Spanish conflict, as revealing the sympathy of the upper classes even in the "democratic" countries for Fascism in action, wherever it seems to be directed against working-class forces challenging improperty, however gross it may be. He brings his profound knowledge of imperialism into play to buttress up his view of the essentially class character of the present international tension, and yet ends up, characteristically, with a programme of moderate half-Socialism which is in essence an appeal to the spirit of reason to transcend the conflicts he has seemed, earlier on, to treat as the inevitable outcome of capitalism under the conditions of modern technique.

G. D. H. C.

SHORTER NOTICES

Bernard Shaw, Frank Harris and Oscar Wilde. By ROBERT HARBOROUGH SHERARD. With a Preface by LORD ALFRED DOUGLAS and an additional Chapter by HUGH KINGSMILL. *Werner Laurie.* 18s.

This large volume is devoted to showing the complete untrustworthiness of Frank Harris's life of Wilde. Written at a quarter of the length, it might have been four times as effective. It is doubtful if anyone, even Mr. Shaw, believed all Harris's stories, but his portrait of Wilde is extraordinarily vivid, and is likely to remain the best ever painted. The most interesting pages of Mr. Sherard's book are the account by Mr. Hugh Kingsmill of the interview in which Mr. Shaw said to him: "Harris's Wilde is far more interesting than the real Wilde"—a statement which we take leave to doubt. (Wilde and Shaw, it must be remembered were Irishmen born in the same year.) Mr. Sherard has undeniably exposed some of Harris's inventions, and his book will interest those who can read any work which illuminates, however faintly, the tragic and prickly story of the life of Wilde.

The Trade Cycle. By R. F. HARROD. *Clarendon Press*, 1936. 10s.

Mr. Harrod describes his book as presenting a new theory of the Trade Cycle; but he says also that it prevents only the outline of a theory, which he intends to present more fully later on. Very emphatically, his work is not for the layman; for he seems to take a delight in presenting even the most concrete facts in highly abstract language. The importance of his work, which evidently owes a great deal to Mr. Keynes, lies in his attempt to give precision to the idea of trade fluctuation as arising, under the existing economic system, inevitably out of the instability of the dynamic relationship between investment and consumption. His view, put very broadly, is that, as output expands, surplus profits tend to increase on account of a growing divergence between average and marginal costs. For this as well as for other reasons the proportion of income saved tends to rise, and the capacity to produce consumable goods tends to outrun the advance in the "propensity to consume." Demand for consumers' goods becomes less elastic; and a point is reached at which further investment becomes unprofitable. But, as investment falls off, consumption must fall as well, so that the decline in economic activity becomes cumulative and proceeds to the bottom, in the absence of special counteracting balances. This very incomplete summary is meant to indicate only the general motive of Mr. Harrod's theory, and not as an exposition of it. He has much acuteness of analysis; but it is to be regretted that he finds it necessary to write so academically as to make most of his book unintelligible except to professional students of economics.

The Mediumship of Maria Silbert. By ADALBERT EVIAN. Translated by H. E. KENNEDY. *Rider.* 10s. 6d.

Written, obviously, for spiritualists, this story of Maria Silbert's mediumship leaves untold much that those who take an interest in psychic phenomena, but are not believers, need to be told. This Austrian lady, who throughout her life was an amateur medium, using the word amateur in its true sense as one who does things for the love of them, was, it seems, of world-wide fame, and again and again, as we read of the weird happenings at the seances she held, we hear that eminent doctors and scientists were present. But their names are not given, nor is there any attempt on the part of the author to produce that independent evidence which non-believing investigators require. For the believers, however, the book must be full of matter, for the incidents and phenomena described cover practically the whole field of manifestation, from clairvoyance to levitation, from spirit communica-

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APPOINTMENTS VACANT & WANTED

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

Applications are invited for the double post of Adviser of Women Students and Warden of Masson Hall. The commencing salary will be not less than £400 rising by £10 per annum to £500, with residence in the Hall. The duties will begin on September 1st. Applications together with testimonials and references (ten copies) should be sent on or before February 25th to the undersigned, from whom further particulars may be obtained.
W. A. FLEMING,
Secretary to the University of Edinburgh.

NEWNHAM COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE

The Council of Newnham College invite applications for the post of a resident full-time Librarian. The initial salary is £250 a year with residence, rising by annual increments of £10 to £350. The Librarian is in sole charge of the Library and candidates should be women between 30 and 40 years of age, with an Honours degree, who have had some experience of Library work. The appointment will take effect on October 1st, 1937. Applications, accompanied by two testimonials and two references, should be sent not later than February 22nd, 1937, to the PRINCIPAL, Newnham College, Cambridge, from whom further particulars may be obtained.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL

Applications invited from women with experience in psychiatric social work for appointment as SOCIAL WORKER in connection with mental cases at St. Pancras Institution, King's Road, St. Pancras, N.W.1. Salary £235–£12 10s.—£310. Social workers co-operate with medical staff in investigating the history of mental cases and supervising social welfare and after-care of patients in such ways as medical staff may direct. *Only candidates with experience or training in psychiatric social work will be considered.*
Application forms obtainable (stamped, addressed foolscap envelope necessary) from MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH (S.D.3), County Hall, Westminster Bridge, S.E.1. Forms returnable by February 17th. Canvassing disqualifies.

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF COULSDON AND PURLEY.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES DEPARTMENT

Applications are invited for the appointment of four Senior Assistants (Male or Female) in the Council's Public Libraries Department, commencing salary £150 per annum, maximum salary £250 per annum. Experience in Public Libraries essential. Candidates must have passed the Intermediate Examination of the Library Association.
The appointments will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, and to the successful candidates passing the necessary Medical Examination.
Forms of application can be obtained from the undersigned and must be returned, accompanied by copies of not more than three recent testimonials, not later than Tuesday, February 16th, 1937, duly endorsed.
Canvassing in any form will be a disqualification.
ERNEST C. KING,
Council Offices, Clerk of the Council.
Purley, Surrey.
February 5th, 1937.

THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CASTLEFORD.

APPOINTMENT OF PUBLIC LIBRARIAN.
Applications are invited from persons with practical experience in Public Library work, for the abovementioned appointment, at a commencing salary of £200 per annum, rising (subject to satisfactory service) by annual increments of £10 to a maximum of £250 per annum.
Candidates should possess one or more of the following qualifications, viz.:—
(i) The Certificate of the London School of Librarianship.
(ii) One or more Certificates of the Library Association.
The appointment will be subject to the provisions of the Local Government and Other Officers' Superannuation Act, 1922, and candidates will be required to pass a satisfactory medical examination.
Applications, on forms to be obtained from the undersigned, and accompanied by copies of three recent testimonials, and endorsed "Librarian," must be received not later than first post on Friday, 12th February, 1937.
Town Hall, W. E. S. BARNES,
Castleford. Clerk of the Council.
25th January, 1937.

EX-OFFICER (46) fourteen years' experience well-known preparatory school (recognised by Board of Education). Three years Lay Organising Secretary on large parish, requires post or working partnership in preparatory or co-educational school, or position of trust. Highest references. Good organiser. Splendid disciplinarian. Sympathetic and understanding. Protestant. Box 557, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

CAMBRIDGE graduate (24), 1st class Arts degree, keen Socialist, wants secretarial or organising post, April. Box 578, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

WANTED. A YOUNG WOMAN of sunny disposition, after Easter; light household duties and part-time care of small girl; non-residential weekdays St. John's Wood; residential week-ends near Hindhead. Box 582, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

CAMBRIDGE Graduate (Woman) with London training in industrial psychology, seeks responsible executive or advisory position in factory or other unwieldy organisation. Some experience as employee. Capable, unacademic, willing to be considered an experiment. Write Box 581, N.S. & N., 10 Gt. Turnstile, London, W.C.1.

tions to terrible happenings that outstrip the macabre imaginings of Poe. Indeed, writers of the macabre will find the book packed with materials ready to their hand, such as the monstrous and threatening form Mrs. Silbert's body assumed at times, and the scene in the cemetery when she played dreadfully with the dead, and threatened the living.

The Diary of Vaslav Nijinski. *Gollancz.* 10*s.* 6*d.*

This "document in madness," written by Nijinski in the earlier stages of his lamentable disease, is described by Mme. Nijinski as "his message to mankind." Her hope that it will be "helpful to many" seems ill-founded, for it contains little beside a vaguely Tolstoian benevolence, mixed with asseverations that the author is God, and occasional reminiscences, which are its most interesting pages. Even to students of *dementia praecox* it is of dubious value, while most admirers of the great dances are likely to find it merely painful. If Nijinski ever had a remarkable intelligence, there is little sign of it here. But *balletomanes* will read with curiosity the occasional references to Diaghileff, and some may find that these compensate for the pathetic revelation of a mind o'erthrown.

Money for Film Stories. By NORMAN LEE. With a foreword by SYDNEY A. MOSELEY. *Pitman.* 7*s.* 6*d.*

Writers generally, and story writers in particular, must often, lured by the tall stories of money for nothing, or what looks like nothing, turn with eager wonder to a consideration of the films as a possible source of revenue, but without any knowledge of what is wanted, and who wants it, and why, when half the world's brightest are either in Hollywood or on their way there, or returning bringing their sheaves with them. But the want is there. The world's brightests are not bright enough, or practical enough, or amenable enough. So Mr. Norman Lee, who is himself a film director, has written this admirably practical book, to tell the neophyte what is wanted, and in what form it should be presented, from the simple story told as simply and dramatically as possible to the elaborate scenario, which only those who have served a term as writers in a film studio are in a position to supply without suffering a little lifetime of trial and error. The would-be film writer will find, however, that he must start with a wide knowledge of the cinema, which only more or less regular attendance can give. But, given a taste for the films, the experienced writer who studies this book with care will go fully armed into Wardour Street, and, perhaps, find the giants as vulnerable as any giant-killer could desire. Anyway, here are the weapons of the craft, described in detail by one who, since he left vaudeville for the screen, has fashioned and used them all.

Week-end Competitions

No. 360

Set by Norman Collins

Dr. Julian Huxley's "Animal of the Week" idea spreads from Regent's Park to Westminster. The usual prizes are offered for brief zoological descriptions (not more than 150 words apiece), designed for the popular enlightenment of visitors, of any three of the following notable exhibits: The Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, Mr. Anthony Eden, Sir John Simon, Mr. Duff Cooper, Lady Astor, The Speaker, Mr. Maxton, Mr. Hore-Belisha and the Lesser Common Back Bencher.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, February 12th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

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RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 358

Set by V. S. Pritchett

"Kiss me Hardy," "Up Guards and at 'em," and other apocryphal sayings have given a human interest to great occasions. The usual prizes are offered for such exclamations suitable to six of the following people and occasions.

1. Hitler on the morning after the Nazi purge.
2. Mr. Charles Laughton during "Peter Pan."
3. Mr. Beverley Nichols on receiving praise from a highbrow reviewer.
4. Any Atlantic flyer on sighting the Atlantic coast.
5. Mussolini ordering gas to be used on the Abyssinians.
6. Goebbels after reading Freud.
7. Freud after reading Goebbels.
8. Mr. Ivor Brown meeting a bishop in Pall Mall.
9. Dr. Buchman at the Surrealist exhibition.
10. General Franco seeing planes overhead.
11. Stalin at his own trial for wrecking.
12. Sir John Reith on a comedian who made a shameful impromptu.
13. Mr. James Douglas on reading for the first time Tristram Shandy.

Report by V. S. Pritchett

This competition was more difficult than most competitors seemed to realise; and in consequence produced far more wit than probability. The tendency to score off Hitler on the morning after the purge, for example, was general; few if any competitors restrained themselves long enough to consider what Hitler might plausibly have said. Is the Führer as witty as readers of THE NEW STATESMAN? I doubt it. The real interest of historical apocrypha is rather its startling, incongruous or picturesque quality. Still, I am no enemy of wit. The other difficulty common to competitions of this kind was that no single competitor produced a wholly good list and some of the best remarks came from competitors who scored only once and missed badly the five remaining times. The only thing to do is to pick out the plums. Elimination humour was suggested by Hitler the morning after the Nazi purge, so we get:

"Who's been at my Enos?" (R. Pendle.)
"Oh, glorious evacuation." (E. Hogan.)

The plausible are better:

"Who the hell *asked* their opinion." (J. B. W. Wilkinson.)
"Sentimentality is not an Aryan characteristic." (Peter Chamberlain.)
"Concentration is the secret of leadership." (A. N. Reay.)
"I stand astonished at my own moderation." (P.S.T.)
"*Now I can sleep!*" (Wm. Bliss.)
"Did they expect to live for ever?" (Allan M. Laing.)
"I have promised them the world, now they have their share of earth." (P.F.)
"Herman to-day I feel a purer man" (Shrub).

And there were many puns on Röhm, like R. R. Wright's, "There's Röhm in Valhalla." Better still, "There was not enough Röhm for all of us." (Szczepan Chrzaszcz).

The best Beverley Nichols was:

"Kiss me, Connolly" (David Robertson.)

But there were:

"The fool hath said. . . ." (Bernard Sankey), and "I must tell the begonias." (Coleridge Hills). "Did you hear, my daffodils?" (N. P. Meadway). "You must let me see your aspidistras sometime, Mr. Ervine" (W. Durell), and "The snowdrops said the same thing better." (Clio).

Freud and Goebbels did not to my surprise encourage a good apocrypha. We had, "What's Oedipus to Odin?" and "What's Odin to Oedipus?" from E. H. Bedwell, and Arthur Lane's neat pair: "The Dirty Yid," and "Again the Id." P. F., again, had "Under Nazism dreams become a reality" and Jonathan Griffin countered with a Freud who says "Kraft durch Freude."

Mussolini aroused too much indignation and the satire became heavy. I liked Gerald Summers "Il Duce é non dolce" and Wm. Bliss's "Let's get it over," and Dythe's "*My* Sanction I think." The only too probable is P. P.'s "To destroy by gas is not death, my braves. It is nature's way of purging herself of disease. You are the dispensing Chemists of God!"

Mr. Ivor Brown's chief exclamation was "Gas and gaiters." Sir John Reith was mainly unprintable. There was a suggestion that he asked the comedian to dinner afterwards.

There was the very probable "No one can accuse me of lacking a sense of humour" (Peter Chamberlain). The plum was "With your joke, Mr. Winterbottom, you have kept all my staff puzzled for ten days" (Clio). The contortions of Mr. James Douglas *in extremis* with Tristram Shandy were faithfully followed, but often to the length of libel. There was a pleasant one from Alan R. Thomas:

"My God! So this is literature."
"Must I suffer the martyrdom of St. Sebastian in the cause of literature?" (J. Usborne).
"We must expurgate our Masters" (P. C. T.)

and a competitor whose name I cannot read has caught the bumptiousness of the *Express* in:

THE charge for classified advertisements is One Shilling and Sixpence per line per insertion (a line averages seven words). One line should be added for Box Number. Substantial reduction for a series of insertions. Copy first post Wednesday. The Advert. Manager, N.S. & N., 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1. (Hol. 3216.)

LECTURES AND MEETINGS

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

A Course of four Lectures on "AIR POWER AND ITS EMPLOYMENT" will be given by AIR VICE-MARSHAL E. L. GOSSAGE, D.S.O., M.C. (Royal Air Force), at the NEW BUILDINGS OF THE UNIVERSITY (Entrance from Montague Place, W.C.1), on THURSDAYS, FEBRUARY 18th and 25th and MARCH 4th and 11th, 1937, at 5.30 p.m. At the First Lecture the Chair will be taken by Air Chief Marshal Sir Robert Brooke-Popham, G.C.V.O., K.C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.

A Course of two Lectures on "PUBLIC ASPECTS OF FINANCE" will be given by PROF. D. H. MACGREGOR, M.C., M.A. (Drummond Professor of Political Economy in the University of Oxford) at THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2) on THURSDAYS, FEBRUARY 18th and 25th, 1937, at 5 p.m. At the First Lecture the Chair will be taken by Sir Josiah Stamp, G.C.B., G.B.E., D.Sc., LL.D.

A Course of two Lectures on "PROBLÈMES DE L'ASSIMILATION ET DE LA DIFFERENCIATION SOCIALES" will be given (in French) by PROFESSOR C. BOUGLÉ (Professor of Sociology in the University of Paris) at THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS (Houghton Street, Aldwych, W.C.2) on FEBRUARY 19th and 22nd, 1937, at 5 p.m. At the First Lecture the Chair will be taken by His Excellency the French Ambassador (Monsieur Charles Corbin).

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S. J. WORSLEY,
Academic Registrar.

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PUBLIC LECTURES AT 5.15 p.m.

February 8th and 22nd.—Two Lectures by DR. F. E. ZEUNER.
(1) "THE CLIMATE OF THE COUNTRIES ADJOINING THE ICE-SHEET OF THE PLEISTOCENE."
(2) "SOME ASPECTS OF EVOLUTION REVEALED BY THE STUDY OF FOSSILS."
Admission free without ticket.

February 10th, 17th and 24th.—Course of Three Lectures on "THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHAMBER MUSIC IN ENGLAND FROM 1550 TO PURCELL" (with illustrations). By DR. ERNST H. MEYER.
Admission free by ticket on application to the SECRETARY stating date and sending stamped addressed envelope.

PACIFISM

It is not enough to ask for peace: not even to work for it: we have to learn a new language, or, simpler still, a new alphabet.

Come and hear DR. GRAHAM HOWE at the Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, on Mondays, February 15th and 22nd, March 1st and 8th, at 8 p.m. The subject: (1) ANXIETY. (2) AGGRESSIVENESS. (3) GUILT. (4) WISDOM.

Tickets, to be obtained by post from 99 Clare Court, Judd Street, W.C.1, or from Regent 2843, or at the door:
2s. 6d. each, or 9s. for the course.
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Some free.

G. P. GOOCH, D.Litt., on "THE OUTLOOK IN EUROPE," at Kensington Town Hall, Tuesdays, Feb. 9th, 16th, 23rd, at 5.30 p.m. Tickets for Course, 2s. 6d. (Single Lecture, 1s.). From MISS CHARLESWORTH, Kensington High School, W.8, or at door.

LIBERALISM IN THE MODERN WORLD.

LECTURES on the second TUESDAY in each month at 8.15 p.m.
in the MANSON HALL, 26 PORTLAND PL., W.1.

February 9th:
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Lecturer: SIR FREDERICK WHYTE, K.C.S.I.
Chairman: Lord Meston, K.C.S.I.

March 9th:
THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURE
Lecturer: GEOFFREY CROWTHER.
Chairman: Lady Layton.

April 13th:
THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE STATE
Lecturer: C. P. SNOW.
Chairman: Mrs. Corbett Ashby.

Seats 3s., 2s. & 1s. can be bought at the door or from The Liberal Party Organisation, 42 Parliament Street, S.W.1.

SCOTS Self-Government Through the Labour Party.
RT. HON. CLEMENT ATTLEE, M.P.
RT. HON. TOM JOHNSTON, M.P.
RITCHIE CALDER,
will speak at a Supper of the London Scots Self-Government Committee, at 7.30 p.m., Wed., Feb. 10th, at New White Heather Restaurant, 75 Strand, W.C.2.
Tickets 3s., from MRS. NORRIE FRASER, 76 Church St., S.W.3.

REV. M. DAVIDSON, D.Sc., will speak on "DETERMINISM IN THE LIGHT OF RECENT PHYSICAL RESEARCH," at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, Holborn, on Tuesday, February 9th, at 7 p.m.
ADMISSION FREE.

THE STATE: Fascist and Soviet Lecture, Sunday 7.30. A. KOHN (S.P.G.B.), A.E.U. Hall, 39 Doughty St., W.C.

THE SEX EDUCATION SOCIETY has arranged for DR. EDWARD GLOVER to lecture on "SEX AND EDUCATION" at The Suffolk Galleries, Suffolk Street, Haymarket, W.1, on Tuesday, February 9th, at 8 p.m. Chairman: Dr. Norman Haire.
Members of the Society will be admitted free to the lectures upon production of a member's ticket. Tickets will be issued for single lectures at a cost of 2s. each.

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LECTURES AND MEETINGS—continued

GUILDHOUSE, Eccleston Square, S.W.1. Sunday, February 7th. At 4, Tea-Table Conference; CAPTAIN BACH: "IS THERE A WAY OUT?" At 6.30. REV. JAMES BINNS, M.A.

THE ETHICAL CHURCH, Queen's Road, Bayswater, W.2. Sunday, February 7th, at 11, CICELY HAMILTON: "THE DANGERS OF ORGANISATION." At 6.30, H. J. BLACKHAM: "MYTHS AND MYSTERIES."

CONWAY HALL, Red Lion Square, Holborn.—Sunday, February 7th, at 11 a.m.: MORITZ J. BONN, D.Sc.: "ISOLATION." 6.30 p.m. Concert Chamber Music. Admission Free. Visitors Welcome.

AEOLIAN HALL, New Bond Street, Theistic Church Service. Sunday, 11: REV. J. TYSSUL DAVIS, B.A. Subject: "THINGS OF WHICH WE ARE CERTAIN."

THE ECONOMIC PROBLEM AND WORLD PEACE—I. "THE CONTINENTAL WESTERN DEMOCRACIES." Lecture by Graham Hutton in Essex Hall, Strand, Monday, February 8th, at 6.15 p.m. Tickets 1s. Write for particulars of eight lectures, 4s. NATIONAL PEACE COUNCIL, 39 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1.

LECTURE and Social every Mon., 8 p.m. Feb. 8th, "THROUGH FIVE COUNTRIES." Youth House, 250 Camden Rd., N.W. 1 (Sul. 5189).

A.I.A. Lectures: Saturday, February 6th, at 3 p.m., ROBERT MEDLEY: "THEATRE DECORATION." Friday, February 12th, 8.15 p.m., ALICK WEST on his book, "CRISIS AND CRITICISM." Both lectures at 9 Great Newport Street (top floor), near Leicester Square Stn.

F.P.S.I. Public Lecture. A. S. NEILL on "THE CRITIC AND THE PROGRESSIVE SCHOOL." Chairman: Dora Russell, at Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, on Wednesday, February 10th at 8 p.m. Tickets: Members, 6d.; Non-members, 1s., from FEDERATION OF PROGRESSIVE SOCIETIES, 4 Fitzroy Street, W.1 (MUS 6975) or at door.

ASSOCIATION OF SCIENTIFIC WORKERS. Five Public Lectures on "SCIENCE AND SOCIETY," in the Large Chemistry Theatre, University College, W.C.1, at 8 p.m.
(1) Feb. 17th. PROF. G. B. S. HALDANE: "FACTS AND THEORIES CONCERNING HUMAN RACE DIFFERENCES."
(2) Feb. 24th. DR. A. L. BACHARACH: "NUTRITION AND SOCIETY."
(3) Mar. 3rd. PROF. H. LEVY: "THE SOCIALISATION OF MATHEMATICS."
(4) Mar. 10th. PROF. P. M. S. BLACKETT: "PHYSICS."
(5) Mar. 17th. PROF. LANCELOT HOGBEN: "THE SOCIAL BACKGROUND OF SCIENCE."
Chairman at first meeting: Prof. Sir F. Gowland Hopkins, O.M., F.R.S., President of A.S.W.
Tickets (1s. single, 4s. series) at door, or from ASSISTANT-SEC., A.S.W., Kelvin House, Hogarth Road, S.W.1.

LECTURES AND MEETINGS—continued

EDUCATION. Survey of individual methods with latest apparatus for children, 3–14 yrs. Evening classes start Feb. 25th. Certificate obtainable. Fees, including practical work and class observation: 1 lecture, 5s. Course of 36, 7 *gns.* Apply: LYNDALE SCHOOL (Co-educational), 67 Eton Avenue, N.W. 3 (PRI 6466).

CHANGE OF ADDRESS
SEX EDUCATION CENTRE, Unity Theatre Club, Britannia Street, King's Cross, W.C.1. Monday, Feb. 8th, 7.30: "The Discipline Implicit in Sexual Freedom," Stella Browne and Janet Chance. Adm. 6d.

CONFERENCES

F.P.S.I. CONFERENCE. The F.P.S.I. is holding a Conference on Law Reform and Civil Liberties at SHORNELLS, Abbey Wood, S.E.2, during the week-end, February 13th to 14th.

Programme:

Sat.	5.30 p.m.	JOHN PATON on "CRIME, POVERTY, AND PUNISHMENT."
Sat.	8.30 p.m.	RONALD KIDD on "THE GOVERNMENT, THE CITIZEN AND THE POLICE."
Sun.	11.30 a.m.	ALEC CRAIG on "FREEDOM AND LITERARY 'OBSCENITY.'"
Sun.	3.0 p.m.	"SOLICITOR" on "MAGISTRATES AND MATRIMONY."

Fees: Sat. tea to Sun. tea: Members, 14s.; Non-members, 15s. Sat. tea to Sun. supper: Members, 15s. 6d.; Non-members, 16s. 6d. Sat. tea to Monday breakfast: Members, 19s.; Non-members, 20s. Single Lectures: Members, 6d.; Non-members, 1s.
Please remit full fee to F.P.S.I., 4 Fitzroy Street, W.1. (Museum 6975.)

F.P.S.I. PUBLIC LECTURES at Conway Hall, 8 p.m. The Lectures concluding the series have been re-arranged as follows:

1937.
Feb. 10th. A. S. NEILL on "THE CRITIC AND THE PROGRESSIVE SCHOOL."
Feb. 17th. SIR STAFFORD CRIPPS on "THE NEED FOR POLITICAL UNITY BETWEEN WORKING CLASS MOVEMENTS."
Feb. 25th. ALDOUS HUXLEY on "RELIGION AND HUMANISM."
Mar. 10th. VERA BRITTAIN on "WOMEN IN TRANSITION."
Mar. 24th. PROFESSOR P. M. S. BLACKETT on "CAN THE NEXT EUROPEAN WAR BE PREVENTED?"

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"Not prudish—but is it funny?"

Dr. Buchman was a bit too true to form with the Surrealists, but I liked, "Alas, the dear demented." "It would be interesting to share with these folks." (M. A. Pyke.)

"God is very versatile, Kit, very versatile."

And James Courage's excellent "Very finite."

Stalin, of course, confessed at once, and Joan Jukes, "I am useless except as manure" has the authentic accent. There were:

"I am a Viper, Comrade Trotsky," and puns on Stainless Steel. The Atlantic Flyer made only one good remark. It came from M. A. Pyke. "Well, well, the Lord has looked after this sparrow all right."

Both the Charles Laughton outbursts are plausible. The names Barrie, Bounty and Hook gave the punsters a chance—too big a chance.

"This hurts me more than it does you." (F. Michael Quinn.)

General Franco was a flop.

The best average lists were sent in by H. P. B., A. N. Reay, Shrub, P. P., and N. P. Meadway, and there was not much to choose between them. But on the whole, I think H. P. B. should have the first prize and Miss A. N. Reay the second.

FIRST PRIZE

1. Hitler—"My movement is free from worms!"
2. Charles Laughton—"The things I've done for Never Never Land!"
5. Musssolini—"Graziani, the Flit!"
6. Goebbels—"Needs considerable concentration."
8. Ivor Brown "Nark Over!"
9. Dr. Buchman—"It come orf in me 'and."

H. P. B.

SECOND PRIZE

1. Hitler—"Concentration is the secret of leadership."
3. Beverley Nichols—"I must get down on my knees about this."
4. Ocean flyer—"Thanks be to Shell!"
5. Mussolini—"Throw physic to the dogs!"
8. Ivor Brown—"That frock doesn't suit you, modom."
12. Sir John Reith—"I do hope little Audrey wasn't listening."

A. N. REAY

CALIBAN'S PROBLEM CONTEST

PROBLEM 214.—RECITATIONS

"I only won two of those recitation contests," said Mulberry.

"I don't know," said I, "what you're talking about."

"Why," said Mulberry, "it was while I was out of town, last week. Six of us were staying down at Addlesville. To while away the time, we had five recitation contests nightly."

"For how many nights?" I asked.

"Six."

"This," continued Mulberry, "was how we arranged things. As I say, we had five recitation contests each night. The judges were Dum-Dum and old Twayblade, both of whom refused to take part. The other four—Topnotch, Aniseed, Paprika and I—competed. We had money on the thing, too. The financial scheme was complicated; it came out of a *Caliban* puzzle."

"Tell me about it," said I.

"Why," said Mulberry, "there was a settlement each night. If any of us won one of the competitions, he received 1*s.* from each of the others. If, however, he won two *successive* competitions, he got, not 2*s.*, but 3*s.* from each of the others—1*s.* plus 2*s.* Three successive wins, similarly, were worth 6*s.* from each (1 + 2 + 3 shillings). And so on."

"And out of 30 competitions," said I, "you only won two altogether?"

"That's right," said Mulberry.

"How did the others fare?"

"I forget," said Mulberry. "All I can tell you is that Topnotch won or lost the same amount each night, and that Aniseed never had to pay anything to Paprika."

How much did each of the four win or lose?

PRIZES FOR PROBLEM SOLVERS

A set of Low's cartoons is awarded to the sender of a correct solution selected at random.

In addition, a record is kept of correct solutions sent, and of the points scored weekly by solvers. On attaining 100 points a solver is entitled to a prize consisting of any book (or books) reviewed or advertised in these columns, of a value not greater than 10*s.* Solvers who have won a prize on this basis are eligible for a second prize on attaining a further 120 points, and for a third prize on attaining a further 150. Solutions must be addressed to CALIBAN, c/o the Editor, and must reach this office not later than Tuesday week following publication of the problem. Solutions to two problems may be sent in one envelope, but on separate sheets of paper.

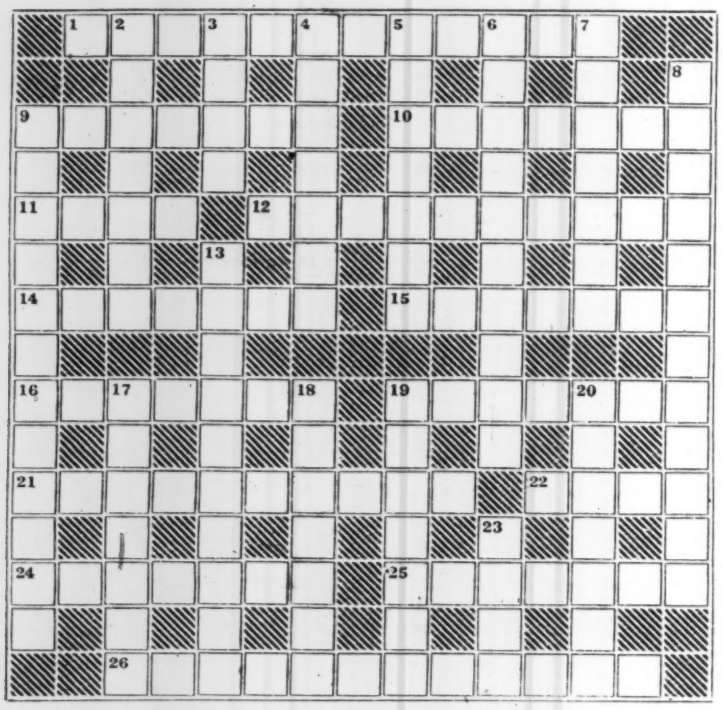
Some indication should be given of the method of solution.

[U.S.A. Competitors. The Editor regrets that the prizes offered in our Week-end Competitions cannot apply to American competitors.]

CALIBAN

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 361

The sender of the first correct solution to be opened may choose as prize a copy of either *This England* or *The Playtime Omnibus*. Envelopes should be addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1, and must arrive not later than first post next Wednesday. Prize-winners should address their claims to the Editor.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
H. M. Palmer, Glenville, Roby, Liverpool.

ACROSS

1. The last have a row in the middle on the first.
9. One of the heralds of the people's downfall under Nebuchadnezzar.
10. Always makes a brave show.
11. Zoë gets cut up about nothing at all.
12. You will find a New Ark close to this water.
14. Equipage for the fielding side?
15. The span is artistically divided.
16. It seems that they cannot help splitting into factions.
19. Those in a minority are not yet legally so.
21. Cricketing position of the foil button.
22. Sculpture of the King Mother?
24. On the sick list after February.
25. Result of summary treatment.
26. Lack of uniformity displeasing to most women.

DOWN

2. Its constitution was undermined at Toledo.
3. Goes open-mouthed into Hamburg.
4. Sandwiched as it were.
5. They no doubt made a habit of drawing a bow at a venture.
6. This hill might turn to Moab.
7. Extremely close, but neither miserly nor stuffy.
8. Where stays are made.
9. Faulty current expenditure.
13. Gets the wind squeezed out of it in play.
17. What one does by not putting money down?
18. Such a head does not necessarily need a big hat.
19. A male eel of good breeding?
20. So 10 men made an offensive combination.
23. The Royal one never gets saucy.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

C	O	M	E	O	U	T	■	B	E	T	T	E	R	S
A	■	O	■	U	■	I	■	E	■	R	■	N	■	T
U	N	L	I	T	■	R	E	D	R	A	T	T	L	E
G	■	A	■	P	■	E	■	W	■	C	■	O	■	V
H	A	R	D	A	N	D	F	A	S	T	R	U	L	E
T	■	■	■	C	■	■	■	R	■	O	■	R	■	■
O	Y	S	T	E	R	S	■	M	E	R	M	A	I	D
U	■	T	■	■	■	T	■	E	■	■	■	G	■	A
T	E	R	E	B	R	A	■	R	O	E	D	E	A	N
■	■	U	■	R	■	N	■	■	■	L	■	■	■	C
C	O	C	K	A	N	D	B	U	L	L	T	A	L	E
O	■	K	■	I	■	D	■	N	■	W	■	R	■	B
C	R	O	S	S	W	O	R	D	■	A	R	O	M	A
O	■	U	■	E	■	W	■	E	■	N	■	S	■	N
A	R	T	I	S	A	N	■	R	E	D	L	E	A	D

Company Meeting

LLOYDS BANK LIMITED

LORD WARDINGTON'S ADDRESS

THE Seventy-ninth Ordinary General Meeting of Lloyds Bank, Ltd., was held on Friday, January 29th, in London. Lord Wardington, Chairman, presided and after referring to the election to the Board of Mr. H. E. S. Upcher and Mr. W. G. Verdon Smith, said (in part): Our deposits, at £406,000,000, show an increase of £6,000,000 in round figures as compared with last year. Our overdrafts have increased to a slightly greater extent. These figures show that we have been able to lend to trade and the public the whole of our increased deposits. From a profit-earning point of view this is distinctly satisfactory.

The chairman then dealt with loans and advances, giving an analysis under certain headings and, continuing, said :—

Our loans to Agriculture form as usual a high proportion of our total loans, amounting in all to £13,300,000. Out of the 20,744 farmers who borrow this sum from us—on an average £643 each—76 have failed during the year, involving us in a loss of a few thousand pounds, averaging £89 per failure. This appears to me to be an astonishingly good result, reflecting the highest credit on an industry which proverbially has always many difficulties to encounter.

Another branch of our loans also shows figures which may be a surprise to you. In spite of the activity of the Stock Markets and the rising prices throughout the year, the amount lent to the Stock Exchange is not unduly high, although in recent months it has certainly shown a distinctly rising tendency, but taken in conjunction with the total of our deposits shows a comparatively low percentage.

Our profit might have appeared even more satisfactory if we had not debited our Profit and Loss Account with various allocations, such as that to Staff Pensions Fund, before we arrived at our profit figure.

SIGNS OF INCREASED PROSPERITY

It is not necessary for me to particularise the signs of our increased prosperity. Wherever you look, even in the depressed areas, they are visible, and all the signs, such as the figures of employment, the reduced amount of unemployment, the increased values of commodities, of industrial shares, full order books, Clearing House, Railway and retail sales returns, and the reduced figures of bankruptcy and bad debts, all point in the same direction. There is this satisfactory feature, too, that the fundamental basis of good international trade is present. The higher prices of primary commodities are fulfilling their function of restoring prosperity to the countries of primary production, and are putting them once more into the position of being able to place orders in industrial countries for the secondary products which they need. Thus we see the impulse of those movements which should result in the general interchange of goods between the nations of the world for the advantage and profit of all.

NEED FOR CAUTION

I wish I could leave the picture there and believe that these bright colours would necessarily develop in intensity. But it is just at such a time when it seems to me it is wise to stand back for a moment and survey the scene with some cautious criticism, in spite of one's natural inward feelings of optimistic expectancy.

It does not require a very long memory to go back to the end of 1919 or the beginning of 1920. In the case of our own country our fault during this post-war boom period was not that credit was restricted, but that it was not restricted soon enough.

I am not suggesting that conditions to-day are the same as they were at the time of which I speak. One factor alone is decidedly different. I have been looking back to the amount of deposits and overdrafts of the five big banks and I find that in 1920 the overdrafts were £767,585,000, and the deposits £1,625,579,000, or 54.2 per cent., whereas at the end of last year the percentage was only 38.1 per cent., the overdrafts being £765,612,000, and the deposits £2,011,582,000. We are lending now practically the same amount as we did in 1920, but the lowness of the percentage, due to the greater amount of the deposits, reveals a very large potential increase of lending capacity. It seems to me, therefore, to be wise to pause for a moment and take stock of the position.

There are many features of the present time, which, on paper at any rate, may be said to be approaching boom conditions; a shortage of labour, especially skilled labour, a continued rise in the price of commodities and of wages, with consequent increased cost of production, an extension of productive capacity, based in some instances on expectations rather than actual orders, and fresh capital issued to the public on the same slender foundations.

IMPORTANCE OF OUR EXPORT TRADE

There is much which is quite healthy in the situation and of good augury for the future, and the increased purchasing power of the primary producing countries is only just beginning to show its effects. It is much to be hoped that everything which can be done will be done to help on international trade, and in particular our own export trade, which ought to benefit so materially from the extension of this movement. The tripartite exchange agreement effected in September between ourselves, the U.S.A. and France raised our hopes that it would prove a first and most important step in the direction of a greater freedom of movement of goods between all nations.

A less restricted export trade is of the highest importance to this country especially, and it is very necessary that the present activity of our internal trade should not make us liable to forget the essential importance of retaining our export connections. There is a definite danger that this may happen. We are so busy internally, that many of our trades under the additional stimulus of our armament programme are working at a 100 per cent. capacity, and in such goods as machine tools, to mention only one, we are unable to meet our own requirements and are actually importing large quantities, while a shortage of labour has induced many manufacturers to scour the country to find fresh workmen and women in the depressed areas who can be persuaded to leave their homes and take up the work which is awaiting them in more fortunate parts of the country.

FUTURE RESPONSIBILITIES

All these factors seem to me to point to two main considerations. In the first place every care must be taken to ensure us against the present activity of our internal trade degenerating into anything which properly can be called a boom. And in the second place, we ought to look ahead to that time when two of the chief causes of our present internal activity have come to an end, our building operations and our rearmament programme, and take all possible measures to fill the gap with increased foreign trade.

The old weapon when the pace was becoming too hot, has been so long kept in its sheath, that its existence has been almost forgotten, and, indeed, higher bank rate and dearer money are handicaps to legitimate trade, however efficacious they may be in other directions, and are inevitably an added burden on the Budget. But without this control we are dependent on open market, or other operations on the part of the authorities diminishing or increasing bankers' cash balances, or on individual action by the banks in restricting or increasing advances to customers.

We have moved a long way from the days when control in these matters was semi-automatic, and many practical men of affairs are becoming more and more aware of a new responsibility attaching to their actions, not merely a responsibility which they always have had to the particular concern which they are interested in running, but a responsibility to the whole body politic. I do not think that this awareness has proceeded very far as yet. A manufacturer extends his plant or accepts orders mainly on the result of his calculation that he can keep the one employed and carry out the others with a reasonable profit and without undue risk. Likewise a banker will decide whether he will grant or withhold a credit primarily on the grounds of its safety and liquidity having due regard to the symmetry of his own figures. It is only in a secondary way that he is influenced by conjectures as to the effects of his actions on the economic life of the nation, or by doubts as to whether any alternative action would result in greater social gain. It is inevitable that this should be so.

At first sight this may seem to indicate the desirability of some central dictatorship. But where is an entirely omniscient dictator to be found?

On the whole I think it is as well that we should continue to guide our course as well as we each may, and the sum of the wisdom and experience of us all will be greater than that of any one central authority however omniscient.

As a people we do not concern ourselves over much with theory, but we have a faculty for dealing with problems or abuses as they arise. Bankers have shown their willingness to assist in ameliorating our unemployed problem by co-operating in the formation of the Special Areas Reconstruction Association, perhaps not with any great optimism.

Further, they show a stronger sense of responsibility to the public by the way in which they criticise the contents of a prospectus appealing for public subscriptions on which they are asked to allow their name to appear.

In conclusion, I would suggest that we are justified in hoping that our present good trade will continue, but that the circumstances are such as to render it necessary that we should be on our guard against any tendency for exaggeration into unhealthy boom-like conditions, while at the same time we should lose no opportunity of maintaining our connections abroad, which will be more than ever useful when our internal activity lessens.

The report and accounts were adopted, and dividends were declared for the half-year ended December 31st at the rate of 12 per cent. per annum on the "A" Shares, and at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum on the "B" Shares, payable, less Income Tax, on and after January 30th, 1937.

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

MR. McKENNA SUPPORTS MR. KEYNES—SOUTH AFRICAN GAMBLES—WEST RAND TRUST AND ANGLO-AMERICAN—RHODESIAN RAILWAYS

THE bankers' universal optimism is now stale news, but there are two conclusions to be drawn from their recent speeches which the student of politics, no less than the investor, should keep freshly in mind. First, only about a third of joint stock bank advances is now taken by productive industry (Mr. Fisher gave Barclays' percentages as 31.8 per cent. for productive industry and 34 per cent. for professional and private borrowers). As sound industrial and trading companies have been, and are still, able to finance themselves by borrowing cheaply from the investing public direct, there is no reason to suppose that bank advances will go on increasing to the 1929 level, especially as in 1929 advances included a mass of frozen loans. If, then, the further increase in advances is likely to be moderate, there is no reason to assume that the Bank of England will not be willing to increase the supply of bank cash to enable the bankers to meet it without selling their investments. As the *Economist* has pointed out, if total advances now increase by a further 14 per cent. to £1,000 millions, the Bank would only have to increase the supply of bank cash by £15 millions. Clearly, half the scare in the gilt-edged market is moonshine. Secondly, if advances for professional and private purposes were to cause undesirable speculation in securities or commodities, for which the Bank of England would be loath to increase the supply of bank cash, the remedy is to take direct action to curtail such advances—not to make money dearer for everybody. This is Mr. Keynes's thesis, and Mr. McKenna came out in strong support of it. The following passage from the speech of the Midland Bank's chairman is almost an argument for control of the banks:

> Consider the risk of excessive speculation. I do not wish to be dogmatic on the subject, but it seems to me that the remedy lies with the banks. They have the power, acting together on an agreed basis, to place a curb upon speculation by directly restricting the quantity of credit used for that purpose. Genuine business would not be affected; there would still be cheap money and abundance of credit for legitimate trade, but there would be no easy money for the mere speculator. I repeat, there are no sufficient indications at present of dangerous speculation, but should this appear a powerful remedy could be provided by the concerted and direct action of the banks without recourse to high rates and indiscriminate restriction of credit. The country ought not to be required to submit to general stagnation as a cure for the activity of speculators.

* * *

It was kind of Mr. McKenna to admit that there was no dangerous speculation on the Stock Exchange at the present time. He did not even think that a speculative mania was likely to develop. In the case of the Midland Bank, Stock Exchange loans were still well below the normal, which Mr. McKenna put at about 2½ per cent. of deposits. Of course, what percentage of the huge advances to "professional and private borrowers" has actually been diverted to Stock Exchange speculation no bank chairman could possibly tell, but it is a curious fact that, apart from the obvious gambles in the mining markets, evidence of the inflationary effects of cheap money upon security prices is to be found chiefly in the so-called "investment" markets, such as utility stocks, tobacco, and bank shares. It may be a little unkind to take bank shares as an example, but if, as the chairmen all reiterate, the banks cannot increase advances (their most paying form of finance) to the former extent because industry is now financing itself in other ways, their profits cannot rise so rapidly unless money rates are to rise substantially, which is most unlikely. I agree with my Statistical Assistant that bank shares are over-valued to yield around 3½ per cent. on last year's dividends, but I do not expect prices to fall as they should, since the shares are held mainly in small lots by thousands of depositors who pretend they are supporting "their bank."

* * *

Stags, who were disappointed in their cup of Horlick's, took their fill of West Rand Investment Trust 10*s*. shares which came on the market this week at 31*s*. 3*d*. The conservative financier may boggle at the idea of holding-finance companies—Anglo-American Corporation of South Africa and its group—creating a subsidiary holding-finance company to acquire shares in developing mining companies, some of which are also holding companies. This sort of inflationary finance was carried to unpleasant extremes in the last industrial boom, but in this case there is the excuse that West Rand Investment Trust, by acquiring 548,000 shares of Western Reefs, 210,000 shares of West Witwatersrand, 200,000 shares of Libanon and 200,000 shares of Venterspost (the last two being subsidiaries of West Witwatersrand), does give the small investor an opportunity of taking a well-spread interest in the exciting new developments on the Western Rand. But at what price? At current market prices the shares being acquired would give a break-up value to West Rand Investment 10*s*. shares of about 25*s*. They are now quoted at 32*s*. Is a premium of 7*s*. excessive for the privilege of having a spread over Western Reefs and West Witwatersrand and its subsidiaries? If it were simply the question of a mere spread I would prefer a straight purchase of West Witwatersrand 10*s*. shares, which many South African experts still regard as undervalued around £19. But it is not so simple. West Rand Investment Trust is acquiring the Anglo-American Corporation interests in a number of prospecting ventures in the Free State and Transvaal to the south and south-west of the Western Reef discoveries. Some of these ventures may turn out to be very valuable. But let me repeat that West Rand Investment Trust shares are a gamble—just as their underlying securities are a gamble. The safer way to take an interest in developing South African mines is to buy the leading finance house shares, as I recommended on December 4. Here are the present prices:

	Price Dec. 4.	Present Price.	Last Divd.	Est. Div. 1937	Yield % on estimated dividend.*
Johannesburg Consolidated Investment £1	85/-	90/6	20	25	£5 18 3
Consolidated Goldfields of S.A. £1	5	6-1/16	20	25	4 6 9
Union Corporation 12/6	9⅞	10⅞	64	68	4 5 0
Anglo-American Corporation of S.A. 10/-	3½	4-25/32	30	40	4 13 3

* After allowing for Dominion income tax relief.

In December I particularly recommended Anglo-American Corporation on account of the enormous appreciation it had enjoyed on its holdings. Their diamond interests are "coming home" and their large holding in the Rhodesian Anglo-American Company (copper) will become an increasing source of revenue in the near future. Moreover, the Corporation has "cashed in" on the whole of its holdings in Western Reefs and "West Wits" and will not hesitate to sell its holdings in West Rand Investment Trust if the public carries the shares to an absurd price. The Corporation will end with the cash—the public with the shares of the bad gambles.

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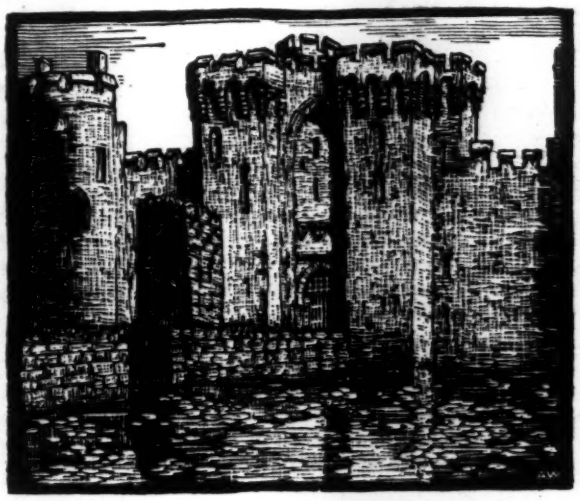
My Statistical Assistant writes: Last month the Beira Railway, which is part of the Rhodesian Railway system, converted its 6½ per cent. debentures by issuing £2,000,000 5 per cent. debentures at par. Now the Rhodesia and Mashonaland Railway companies have given notice that all their outstanding debentures are to be repaid and replaced by a single issue of £21,750,000 4½ per cent. debentures at 98. The Beira issue looked too cheap at the time, the annual service of the issue being covered over three times, and was an immediate success. Its debentures are now 105 and the yield, assuming redemption in 1946, works out at about 4½ per cent. This present issue is a very different proposition. In the first place the amount of the issue is large, the yield is no more than 4⅜ per cent. and the cover is somewhat thin. The anticipated net profit after depreciation and renewals for the year ending September, 1937, is £1,864,000 compared with the annual service requirements of the debentures of £1,100,000. One of the troubles of the Rhodesian Railways is that they have been financed almost entirely on borrowed money, the share capital being no more than £8,000 for the Rhodesia Railways and £450,000 for the Mashonaland Railways. The two companies are to be amalgamated, and the issued loan and share capital will be:

Debenture Stock	£21,750,000
Shares	500,000

The company may have plenty of assets behind the debentures, but to investor's eyes the capital structure appears top-heavy. Nor has the moratorium of a few years ago (caused by the preponderance of loan capital) been forgotten. There are many good features about the stock and the sponsors are first-class names. Nevertheless, the good names behind the Richard Thomas issue did not prevent a dismal fiasco. Trust companies who hold the Rhodesia and Mashonaland Railways 6 per cent. Consolidated Debentures for income purposes have no reason to convert, since the yield on the new stock is low and there is "nothing to go for." Personally I regard the new stock as too dear, and would prophesy no premium on the issue price, if not a large discount, when dealings commence. I suggest that it was a tactical error to give the Beira stock the glamour of a 5 per cent. yield (albeit for no more than ten years certain) and then follow with 4½ per cent. at 98, for Rhodesia Railways which looks dowdy by comparison.



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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

To every man or woman with up to £200 to invest

FREEHOLD Co-operative Investment Trust, Ltd., which has paid dividends at the *minimum rate of* 7% *per annum* ever since its foundation, is prepared to receive further sums of from £20 to a maximum of £200 for *co-operative investment in Property*—the stable high-yield security regarded with favour by Banks, Insurance Companies, Building Societies and Trustees.

The Society invests the monies of its Members in *income-producing Property*, let to tenants drawn from the *medium rent-paying class*. The Properties co-operatively owned by Members of the Society represent a total investment of £110,731 with an annual rent-roll in excess of £16,500. The *only* Prior Charges are Mortgages on specific properties, to a total value of £77,339.

To investors seeking a safe yet remunerative outlet for capital in amounts up to £200, the Society's shares offer unique advantages. Full details will be sent you on receipt of the coupon below.

Safest of all BRICKS & MORTAR

- ONE OF THE OLDEST-ESTABLISHED SOCIETIES FOR CO-OPERATIVE INVESTMENT IN PROPERTY.
- NO DEBENTURES, LOAN STOCK OR MORTGAGE BONDS.
- ACCOUNTS AUDITED BY PUBLIC AUDITOR APPROVED BY H.M. TREASURY.

To Freehold Co-operative Investment Trust, Ltd.,
11, Princes Street, Cavendish Square, London, W.1.

Please send me, without obligation, your pamphlet describing how I can secure a safe 7% return on sums of from £20 *to* £200 *by Investing Co-operatively in Property.*

Name.....

Address.....

.....N.S. F.5.

THE SAFE HIGH-YIELD INVESTMENT